United Nations S/PV.7376

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7376th meeting
Thursday, 5 February 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Mangaral
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	France	Mr. Lamek
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Mrs. Jakubonė
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

The situation in Guinea-Bissau

Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (S/2015/37)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

15-03221 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Guinea-Bissau

Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (S/2015/37)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Ghana, Guinea-Bissau and Timor-Leste to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Miguel Trovoada, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, and His Excellency Mr. Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Brazil, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/37, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau.

I now give the floor to Mr. Trovoada.

Mr. Trovoada (*spoke in French*): I thank the Council for the opportunity to present the report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/37) on recent developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS).

Since the most recent update of the Secretary-General to the Council (S/2014/805), some noteworthy developments have been observed, including the holding of a summit of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in Abuja, on 15 December 2014, where it was decided that the mandate of the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB) would be extended in its current configuration for six months, which could be renewed.

Regarding the reform of the defence and security forces, the incumbent Minister of that sector has introduced new amendments to the legislation on the creation of the special pension fund. She has also presented the Prime Minister with a list of personnel eligible for demobilization and retirement, which is being analysed.

In January, the Minister of Justice led the review and validation of the proposed programme of reform of the judiciary. The validated document will incorporate all the proposals to be submitted by the Government to the round table of international partners, scheduled for 25 March in Brussels. That will be another important step towards the establishment of an accessible, transparent and credible system of justice in Guinea-Bissau.

Also in January, the Human Rights Council undertook the second universal periodic review of Guinea-Bissau. It made recommendations, particularly in terms of strengthening the protection of human rights and the fight against impunity and human rights violations committed in the past. It also recommended the country's accession to a number of legal instruments and the ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

On the social front, the Government has been able to continue providing basic services to the population and to ensure an acceptable level of prevention against the Ebola outbreak. Overall, the actions and decisions taken indicate that neither the desire for change nor the support of partners has wavered.

Let me draw the Council's attention to the direction in which the Government intends to move. In accordance with its programme for the next four years, unanimously approved by the National Assembly, the Government has defined a strategy and priorities for the Brussels round table, which is of special importance to UNIOGBIS. As for the first goal — the consolidation of the rule of law, promoting good governance and reform of State institutions — there has been encouraging progress in strategic planning and the drafting of legislation, particularly in the fields of defence, security and justice. With a view to strengthening national unity, the National Assembly has reactivated the commission to promote national dialogue and established the structures necessary to do so.

Despite these efforts, the situation remains fragile because, as the Secretary-General often says, there can be no lasting peace without development and no development without lasting peace. It is certain that there will be neither one nor the other without the primacy of the rule of law and respect for human rights. In this regard, the United Nations system in Guinea-Bissau welcomes the adoption by the Government of an integrated approach ensuring the complementarity of efforts towards poverty eradication and economic development with good governance, thereby creating the potential for the promotion of social progress.

The priorities announced by the Government to the strategic assessment mission show that the return to constitutional order, as positive as it has been, has not yet made it possible to address the root causes of instability in Guinea-Bissau. This means that the socio-political environment is characterized by a climate in which hope for a future free of uncertainty coexists with a sense of stability that remains precarious. Guinea-Bissau continues to need support, including in strengthening democratic institutions, restructuring the defence and security sector, strengthening the judicial system, improving the functioning of the public administration, and increasing its capacity to fight impunity and transnational crime, among others.

Accordingly, the Secretary-General recommends the strengthening of the good offices of his Special Representative in order to contribute to the promotion of an environment of peace and stability while encouraging dialogue towards national reconciliation. Trust among the political leaders of the country remains unquestionably an essential element of stability. Similarly, UNIOGBIS should continue to promote the strengthening of cooperation between Guinea-Bissau and its international partners by providing a coordinated response to the country's reform efforts. In that respect, special attention must be paid to deepening the partnership with ECOWAS, the African Union, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and the European Union, given the regional, continental, international and cultural dimensions of the issue of development in Guinea-Bissau.

Let me stress a third aspect by reaffirming that Guinea-Bissau needs ECOMIB and that ECOMIB needs the support of the international community and in particular the Security Council. The deployment of a regional force is an exceptional measure taken by ECOWAS, whose primary task as a regional economic community is to promote the socioeconomic development of its member States with a view to short-, medium- and long-term integration.

It is clear that the assistance provided by the international community to Guinea-Bissau cannot last forever. In this perspective, the philosophy that must inspire the strategy of partnership between the country and the international community in the context of development assistance must seek to create, both for the people of Guinea-Bissau and for their partners, conditions that will allow Guinea-Bissau to do without international assistance. The United Nations is striving for that objective by taking initiatives and promoting actions to arrive at the point at which the country will no longer need either a political mission or a foreign military force on its soil.

The challenges are vast, numerous and complex, but they are not insurmountable. The consolidation of peace and stability in Guinea-Bissau, a prerequisite for development, requires joint efforts, patience and perseverance. In this context, the commitment of the Security Council and the international community as a whole to that country has never been more necessary, important and urgent in ensuring that the achievements won to date are consolidated and the excesses of the past are forever consigned to history.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Trovoada for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Patriota.

Mr. Patriota: Let me thank you, Sir, for the invitation to address the Security Council this morning in my capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC).

I would also like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Miguel Trovoada for his insightful presentation and for sharing a vision of the progress, challenges and opportunities that Guinea-Bissau faces today. I am particularly grateful for his readiness to cooperate with the Peacebuilding Commission towards our shared objective of providing the best support to the authorities and the people of Guinea-Bissau.

Two weeks ago, the PBC Guinea-Bissau configuration held its first meeting of the year, to which we invited Special Representative Trovoada and Prime Minister Simões Pereira to brief from Bissau. We also invited the Department of Political Affairs to debrief on the

strategic assessment mission that the Council requested of the Secretary-General through resolution 2157 (2014), of 29 May 2014.

I would like to take this opportunity to attest to the commendable achievements since the new authorities came into power in Guinea-Bissau last June. I was able to witness that first-hand last fall when I travelled to Bissau. The careful analyses heard from the Prime Minister, the Department of Political Affairs and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General during our last PBC meeting, and again today from Mr. Trovoada, are all in agreement. As the PBC engages this year in an important review of the peacebuilding architecture, I believe that Guinea-Bissau provides some valuable lessons about the difference that a legitimate, competent and inclusive Government can make when combined with committed political accompaniment by international partners.

What is different today from any other time in the modern history of Guinea-Bissau is that, despite the existing challenges posed by rampant poverty and the legacy of decades of unsatisfactory governance, a better and more stable future for the country and its population seems to be within reach. With modest, timely and well-thought-out efforts, the new authorities of the country have put Guinea-Bissau on a promising track, while showing their willingness to overcome the dysfunction of the past and to do things in a democratic and inclusive results-oriented manner. In the seven months since the new authorities have been in power, politics has been conducted wisely and courageously, including on thorny issues such as the reform of the defence and security apparatus, the need to rebuild the social contract through national dialogue and reconciliation, and improving the justice system. This new era of progress has also been marked by the delivery of basic services to a greater number of people.

I am pleased that the Council is considering the recommendations of the Secretary-General's recent assessment, which provides a thorough and honest diagnosis of how Guinea-Bissau's ills from the past could be overcome. The report (S/2015/37) also emphasizes the risks that lie ahead. It places responsibility on the authorities to own and lead the reforms, paving the way towards democratization and prosperity. However, we know that, although this predisposition is essential, what is also required now more than ever is that our words of support translate into deeds. Our solidarity should catalyse long-term sustainable engagement. I should like, therefore, to urge regional neighbours, friends and partners of Guinea-Bissau to actively participate and ensure the success of the round table for Guinea-Bissau to be held on 25 March in Brussels. Let me remind the Council that we are dealing with a comparatively small-scale challenge. If we cannot succeed in Guinea-Bissau, how are we to contemplate success with regard to more complex and bigger problems?

We have come a long way in a short time with respect Guinea-Bissau, and opportunities to consolidate peacebuilding gains rarely present themselves in as promising a way as they do right now in the country. To build the State sustainably, the country will still require strong support from United Nations, especially the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission. The situation we are witnessing presents fertile ground for both bodies to cooperate and focus international support on the Government's priorities. That means that we should continue supporting the work done by the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), and thus welcome the renewal and update of its mandate for one year. We also recognize the valuable work done by the Economic Community of West African States Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB) in securing institutions and advancing security sector reform in the country, and we believe that the Security Council should politically endorse it. Both UNIOGBIS and ECOMIB are trusted partners of the Bissau-Guineans and have shown solidarity, understanding and the ability to make a significant difference during difficult times. Now that the situation is improving, their assistance will be more valuable than ever. Both institutions therefore require the Council's continued loyal support.

I would also like to emphasize the need to reinforce the role of civil society, especially of women and youth, in decision-making processes designed to change the paradigm of poverty and underdevelopment in Guinea-Bissau. It is time to start changing the long-held view that Guinea-Bissau is a chronic case of corruption, impunity and drug trafficking. We should favour an approach that maximizes the potential and promises of a nation full of youth, energy and desire to turn the page on its darkest history. For that, the State must foster dialogue across society, leading by example in ensuring that political actors continue to put their differences aside with a view to advancing the interests of the nation. We must redouble efforts, international partners and Bissau-Guineans alike, to ensure that

sustainable progress and stability become the new reality henceforth.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Ambassador Patriota for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Guinea-Bissau.

Mrs. P. D'Alva (Guinea-Bissau): First, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of February 2015. I also thank all Council members for allowing my delegation to come to the Council table.

At the outset, my delegation would like also to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau, His Excellency Mr. Miguel Trovoada, for the briefing he just gave on developments in our country and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), as well as for all his dedication and commitment to peacebuilding in Guinea-Bissau since his appointment. We commend the work of UNIOGBIS and welcome the recommendation of the Secretary-General to extend its mandate for 12 additional months.

Allow me also to express my country sincere appreciation to His Excellency Ambassador António de Aguiar Patriota, Permanent Representative of Brazil and Chair of Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), for his commitment and personal engagement and for his clear advocacy for concrete solutions for the consolidation of the peace process in Guinea-Bissau. The PBC Guinea-Bissau configuration has been an important partner for my Government because of its fundamental role on consolidating efforts by the international community to support and assist Guinea-Bissau.

We also extend our gratitude to Her Excellency Ambassador Sofia Mesquita Borges, Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste, for the statement she will make later on behalf of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP) and for the willingness of the Community to support our country on the new challenges for future.

After my country's long and struggle-filled road since the restoration of constitutional order, I confess to the Council that today I feel very optimistic as I take the floor here. As underlined by the previous speakers, the efforts and progress made by the democratically elected authorities of Guinea-Bissau have contributed tremendously to the improvement of the political and socioeconomic situation in the country. An environment with open communication, collaboration and understanding among the main elected institutions of the country also played an important role in the positive results been seeing in Guinea-Bissau today.

Since assuming office, the new Government has outlined three phases as part of a strategy to deal with challenges of the country, as reflectd in the Emergency Plan, the Contingency Plan and the Medium-Term Development Plan. When the Government took office, it was confronted with multitude of socioeconomic problems, including salary arrears, strikes by education and health-care professionals and difficulties in providing basic services such as electricity and drinking water. In addition to all those challenges, the subregion confronted by the Ebola epidemic, for which Guinea-Bissau needed to take preventive measures. The Government's Emergency Plan was aimed at focusing on tackling those immediate issues. Today we can proudly say that the Government was able to substantially reduce the arrears due civil servants, save the school year, significantly improve electricity and drinking water services and keep the health-care system functioning, including maintaining the level of no reported cases of Ebola in the country.

Within the framework of the Contingency Plan, the Government has created a national commission to verify all contracts previously drawn up by the transition Government concerning exploration of the country's natural resources, in the light of their legal legitimacy as well as their benefits for the country. The Government will submit its medium-term development plan to the international community at the international donor conference scheduled to take place on 26 March in Brussels.

The authorities and people of Guinea-Bissau are fully aware that the sustainability of peace and the development of our country are our primary responsibility. However, as a fragile country that has struggled with enormous difficulties and challenges for years, we are in serious need of the international community's support and financial assistance if we are to stay on the path to development. We need engagement on the part of our partners more than ever now so that, like the rest of the world, we can finally focus on our sustainable development goals. In that regard, we hope that all our partners and friends will stay with us on our new course and participate in the aforementioned

donor round-table conference. We appreciate and commend the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the CPLP, the International Organization of la Francophonie and all of Guinea-Bissau's other bilateral partners for their involvement in the preparatory process for the conference.

Our Government is fully engaged in the process of reform, and as Prime Minister Domingos Simões Pereira reassured the International Contact Group for Guinea-Bissau at its last meeting, here in New York in November, Guinea-Bissau remains strongly committed to implementing all the reforms necessary to enable the country to continue to move ahead. While we are working on many important reforms, reform of the security sector remains one of the Government's priorities, and in fact has already begun, though slowly, with contributions and support from ECOWAS and other bilateral and multilateral partners. President José Mário Vaz's appointment in September of a new chief of the armed forces, the creation of a national security-sector steering committee, the Government's engagement through the Ministry of Defence and the recent handover of our military infrastructure, including four army barracks that are being refurbished under the country's defence and security-sector reform programme by the ECOWAS Commission, show that reform is indeed under way.

For all those efforts, we commend and thank Ghana, the current Chair of ECOWAS, for all its efforts and for all that ECOWAS has been trying to do to maintain peace and stability in Guinea-Bissau. However, for those efforts to really be sustainably implemented, Guinea-Bissau is counting on financial assistance from all its bilateral and multilateral partners to enable it to secure and maintain its pension fund for retired military personnel.

In conclusion, I would like to draw the Council's attention to the fact that all the problems that Guinea-Bissau has faced have been repeatedly reported on in the Council and in various international forums over the years. We believe the time has now come for concrete action, and that is what the people of Guinea-Bissau expect from the international community and all those present here. Guinea-Bissau has so much to give to the world, and with the support of the international community and the will and perseverance of its humble people, that will be possible.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Ghana.

Mr. Kanda (Ghana): At the outset, I would like to congratulate China on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month and on its distinguished leadership. I would also like to affirm the appreciation and continued support of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Ghana for the Council's work towards world peace and security for sustainable development.

On 18 November, the tenth meeting of the International Contact Group for Guinea-Bissau was held at here at United Nations Headquarters, under the leadership of the Foreign Ministers of Ghana and Timor-Leste, in order to explore effective ways of coordinating and harmonizing international interventions for the best possible results in our efforts to ensure Guinea-Bissau's political stability and economic recovery. Our deliberations were not oblivious to the scarcity of available resources for urgent and competing global needs. Yet the need for us to strive hard to sustain and make progress kept us resilient, in the belief that with the Council's support we will be able to give the people of Guinea-Bissau hope for the future.

Since then, some progress has been made by the Government of Guinea-Bissau, ECOWAS, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and the United Nations towards sustaining the gains necessary for Guinea-Bissau's political stability and economic recovery. I would therefore like to thank the Secretary-General for his report dated 19 January (S/2015/37) on developments in the country and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau. We urge all partners to continue to support Guinea-Bissau. ECOWAS supports the Secretary-General's recommendation for the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau to be extended for a period of 12 months, until 29 February 2016.

For its part, ECOWAS will continue to support efforts to consolidate peace, stability and security as well as to promote sustainable development in Guinea-Bissau. Consequently, we have extended the mandate of the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB) beyond 31 December 2014 for another six months, retaining the existing force strength despite the impact of the Ebola virus disease on West Africa's fragile economies. United Nations support for ECOMIB's

work is indeed essential to maintaining the progress that has so far been made in the country.

In view of the current political challenges facing the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, the Government has put together a three-phase reform programme encompassing emergency, contingency and development plans, and has urged its development partners to help with the process. At its 33rd meeting, the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council recommended, among other things, that international partners participate actively in the Guinea-Bissau international donor conference, intended to help finance the country's proposed reform programme. To that end, Ghana will host a preparatory meeting in Accra on 9 February.

In conclusion, I wish to urge our international partners to continue to support Guinea-Bissau in its efforts to sustain the gains made in consolidating peace, democracy and economic development by effectively participating in the donor pledging conference scheduled to take place on 25 March in Brussels.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Timor-Leste.

Mrs. Mesquita Borges (Timor-Leste): First of all, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this very important meeting. I also congratulate you, Sir, on the Chinese delegation's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month, and we wish you well. I also want to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Miguel Trovoada, for briefing us on the recent developments, and Ambassador Patriota in his capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission.

I am honoured to address the Council this morning on behalf of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP), whose members are Angola, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tome and Principe and, my own country, Timor-Leste.

Under the steady leadership of the newly elected authorities, Guinea-Bissau has made significant progress in recent months. They have taken the first steps to implement security sector reform, reinforce the judicial system, improve the management of State revenues and enhance the delivery of basic social services and utilities, with a particular focus on the education sector and Ebola prevention.

With regard to security sector reform, the new Armed Forces Chief of Staff has been reshuffling the leadership of various units since his appointment, and the Minister of Defence has established a committee to review the list of military personnel to demobilize through retirement. We thank the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for the continued maintenance of the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB). We recognize the critical role it has played in maintaining stability, protecting the authorities and institutions and engaging in efforts aimed at security sector reform. Those efforts must continue in a sustainable way as part of a holistic programme and in coordination with other international partners that envisage resuming cooperation in that area, including CPLP countries.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/37) points to the many challenges that lay ahead for Guinea-Bissau. We therefore encourage the Government to continue the State reforms aimed at greater political stability and socioeconomic development, at consolidating the rule of law and at protecting and promoting the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of all Bissau-Guineans. However, despite those accomplishments, Guinea-Bissau remains a post-conflict State with fragile institutions and scarce financial resources. It is therefore vital that the international community support the reform efforts in their technical and financial aspects, including by guaranteeing stability to enable the national authorities to implement the necessary reforms.

The CPLP and its member States remain deeply committed to supporting the people and authorities of Guinea-Bissau. On 29 October, an extraordinary meeting of the Council of Ministers of the CPLP reaffirmed the relevant role the Community can play in providing technical assistance to the country, drawing on the common language, administrative model and experience of its member States in cooperating with Guinea-Bissau.

As previously mentioned by the representative of Ghana, in November our respective Ministers for Foreign Affairs, as Chairs of ECOWAS and the CPLP respectively, hosted a very successful and fruitful meeting of the International Contact Group, where His Excellency Prime Minister Domingos Simões Pereira shared the Government's main reform priorities. The Group highlighted the need for ECOMIB to continue its mission. The Group also called upon all international

partners to actively participate in the Guinea-Bissau international donor conference scheduled for March 25 in Brussels.

On behalf of the CPLP, I want to assure Guinea-Bissau of the full support of all of the Community's member States to the donor conference, and that we will continue to seek the full engagement of all international partners. At this crucial juncture, it is imperative that the international community support the ongoing and planned reform efforts of the authorities of Guinea-Bissau and that all stakeholders align themselves with the priorities set by the Government and approved by the National Assembly.

The CPLP and its member States remain engaged in coordination efforts with the United Nations, ECOWAS, the African Union and the European Union. The Peacebuilding Commission, its Guinea-Bissau configuration and the International Contact Group are well-suited platforms to deepen that cooperation in support of the priorities identified by the Government of Guinea-Bissau.

Finally, we recognize the crucial role of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) and that of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. In that regard, we welcome the Secretary-General's recent report on Guinea-Bissau and its recommendations, which we fully support, particularly the extension of UNIOGBIS for a period of 12 months and the Council's endorsement of ECOMIB as a guarantor of stability and a partner in security sector reform.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7377

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7377th meeting
Friday, 6 February 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Chad	Mr. Mangaral
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	France	Mr. Bertoux
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Mrs. Jakubonė
	Malaysia	Mr. Haniff
	New Zealand	Mrs. Schwalger
	Nigeria	Mr. Sarki
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Tatham
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (S/2015/74)

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15-03331 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (S/2015/74)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Serbia to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Farid Zarif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome Mr. Zarif, who is joining today's meeting via video-teleconference from Pristina.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Hashim Thaçi to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/74, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo.

I now give the floor to Mr. Farid Zarif.

Mr. Zarif: This Council meets today at a key juncture in Kosovo's history. Last December, after a prolonged political impasse, a new Government was established in Kosovo as a result of an alliance between the Democratic Party of Kosovo and the Democratic League of Kosovo. The new Government, led by Prime Minister Isa Mustafa, declared its commitment to economic reforms, strengthening the rule of law, European and Euro-Atlantic integration and a continued dialogue with Belgrade.

Over the past weeks, however, the Government had to focus on responding to public protests in Pristina on 24 and 27 January involving up to 7,000 people, which turned violent and caused injuries and destruction of public and private property. The protests were largely organized by the opposition movement called Vetëvendosje!, or Self-Determination!, to demand the dismissal of a Kosovo Serb Minister for Communities and Returns for the controversial remarks attributed to him in reaction to the protests in Gjakovë/Đakovica against visiting Serbian internally displaced persons on the occasion of the Orthodox New Year, on 6 January. The protesters in Pristina also demanded the reversal of the Government's decision to withdraw a draft law concerning the transformation of one of the largest industrial entities, Trepça Mines, into a publicly owned enterprise. In addition, the protests appear to have been fuelled by a lingering wider public discontent with the economic situation and a drastic increase in the migration of people out of Kosovo in recent months. The 27 January protest was particularly violent and resulted in over 50 protesters and 100 police officers seeking medical assistance. Some 160 persons were arrested and most of them subsequently released, including the mayor of Pristina, a leader of the Self-Determination! movement.

While peaceful protest is an essential right, the criminal violence and vandalism that accompanied the protests on 24 and 27 January are deplorable. Employing such methods in the guise of pressing for any particular political change or agenda is nothing less than a backward-looking choice — backwards from the voters' aspirations expressed in the elections of June 2014, which were organized throughout Kosovo under a single legal framework.

I commend the prompt and unequivocal public condemnation of those acts by responsible political and civil society leaders in Kosovo. In that context, I wish to acknowledge the decision of some political parties, unions and civil society organizations to publicly distance themselves from the violent acts that took place during the demonstrations. Unfortunately, however, a small number of other political figures, mostly from the opposition, attempted to exploit the situation and deflect their own responsibility for what happened. While the Kosovo police had to resort to the use of tear gas and water cannons, its response was professional and proportional in the face of determined attempts by some elements among the protesters to assault the main public Government buildings, including by throwing

stones and petrol bombs at the buildings and those protecting them.

In that context, I appreciate the efforts made by leaders both in Pristina and Belgrade to restrain political acrimony surrounding the highly complex matter related to the future of the Trepça mining enterprise. I hope that a similarly measured approach will be adopted by all sides with regard to the dismissal of the Kosovo Serb Minister for Communities and Returns on 3 February. The new Government's stated objectives and resolve to undertake the serious work required at this critical juncture should not be undermined by such short-term challenges.

Despite those developments in Pristina, leaders in both Belgrade and Pristina are determined to continue with their high-level dialogue, which will be resumed next Monday, 9 February, in Brussels. In fact, those who initiated and initialled the First Agreement of Principles Governing the Normalization of Relations in April 2013, Mr. Dačić and Mr. Thaçi, are in the Council Chamber today. I urge both of them to continue to be active supporters of the full implementation of the agreed provisions and of the further tough core decisions that are required for a comprehensive normalization of relations.

From its inception, the dialogue facilitated by the European Union has been about making hard choices — between the past and the future, between stagnation and progress and between consolidating political power and doing what is in the best interest of all people in the region. The meeting on 9 February presents an opportunity to reaffirm the commitment to a constructive and purposeful dialogue, with a view to shaping a better future for all affected communities in the region. I welcome therefore renewed statements of determination by both Belgrade and Pristina to resolve outstanding differences concerning the implementation of the existing agreements. In that context, I wish to highlight the need for the Kosovo Government's early commitment to the establishment of the association/community of Serb-majority municipalities during the coming period. That is one of the core provisions of the April 2013 Agreement. I also hope that the relations between Belgrade and Pristina will delve into new important areas as the next round of the dialogue unfolds.

Both the new Kosovo Assembly and the new coalition Government in Pristina have made sensible choices in their priorities, and appear to be acting apace. The formation by the Government of a technical team tasked with preparing the necessary legislation for the establishment of the specialist court is critical. I add my own voice to those of many others in the international community who have urged the Assembly and the Government to move swiftly to complete all the required steps, given the fundamental importance of this issue to justice and reconciliation in Kosovo. The new Government has taken early and prudent steps on some other immediate priorities, such as planning viable economic development and enhancing the rule of law. Both are essential to creating new and equal opportunities for all, and to building confidence in public institutions to promote good governance and protect the rights of all.

I also applaud the swift action taken by the Kosovo Assembly in considering a draft law criminalizing participation in armed conflicts outside Kosovo. I urge further consideration of the draft, in consultation with concerned representatives of the international community. Kosovo's security institutions have already taken active steps by arresting dozens of terror suspects and confiscating weapons and ammunition, and this legislation will help provide a more tailored legal framework for handling the problem in the future. As ever, however, it should be recognized that law enforcement measures alone are not sufficient to address the phenomenon in question. The continuous engagement of political and religious community leaders is vital to deterring youngsters from being lured into violent extremist movements. I note with appreciation that such work is already ongoing.

I welcome the Government's commitment to addressing the root causes of social inequality and high unemployment in Kosovo, but am also alarmed at the growing numbers of irregular, illegal migrants to Western Europe. Many of the issues I have highlighted here trace their roots to a widely perceived dearth of economic and social prospects, especially among Kosovo's young people. In this respect, I note the steps taken by the Kosovo authorities in recent days, including the establishment of an executive commission to carry out an analysis of unpaid debts and review the possibility of debt forgiveness. These steps include a Kosovo Assembly resolution proposing, inter alia, the creation of a special fund for preventing irregular migration, as well as President Jahjaga and Prime Minister Mustafa's initiative to engage both the Government and international stakeholders in a broader discussion of this troubling issue. I urge the Pristina

authorities to proceed judiciously in these matters and to continue to avail themselves of the many sources of advice the international community can offer.

Notable progress has been made since my last briefing (see S/PV.7327) in respect of the protection and promotion of cultural heritage. The Council for the Protection of the Village of Hoçë e Madhe/Velika Hoča was established on 30 January, some two years after the law mandating its creation came into force. Incidents of thefts and vandalism affecting religious sites across Kosovo remain too frequent and demonstrate the need for continuous efforts on the part of the authorities to promote public awareness and appreciation of the value of the rich and diverse cultural heritage of all people in Kosovo. While authorities have made efforts to react to and prevent illegal construction within special protective zones, in particular around the Visoki Dečani monastery, the sensitivity of this matter and its possible impact on intercommunity relations should warrant even swifter action by officials. Incidents between visitors to Serbian Orthodox sites and local demonstrators, such as that which took place on 6 January in Gjakovë/Đakovica, need to be addressed through enhanced local dialogue, beyond simple law enforcement measures.

Finally, with regard to progress in the critical process of establishing the fate of missing persons, I urge both sides to muster the political will necessary to bring about a swift closure of the 1,655 outstanding cases, in order to help heal the wounds of the conflict and its aftermath, alleviate the grief and suffering of the families, bring the perpetrators to justice, provide compensation to the affected families, and facilitate reconciliation. In light of all the developments I have discussed today, I trust that leaders at all levels in both Belgrade and Pristina will courageously embrace their responsibility at this critical moment in the historic process of the normalization of relations and will not shy away from making the often trying choices they are likely to face in the dialogue process.

In conclusion, I wish to express my profound gratitude to Council members for their support to the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo. We will continue working intensively and constructively with our local and international partners, in accordance with our mandate.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Zarif for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Dačić.

Mr. Dačić (Serbia) (*spoke in Serbian; English text provided by the delegation*): Allow me to express my gratitude for the opportunity to address the Security Council on the occasion of the consideration of the most recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/74) on the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). I would like to thank all the members of this organ for their continued attention they accord to the question of Kosovo and Metohija. Drawing upon the constructive cooperation achieved over the 15 years since the establishment of the Interim Administration in Kosovo and Metohija, I am convinced that, through consistent efforts and joint endeavours based on resolution 1244 (1999), we shall arrive at the goal to which we all aspire — the political settlement of the question of Kosovo and Metohija.

I would like to reiterate what I have said on a number of occasions before this body. The presence of the United Nations Mission is of paramount importance to stability in the southern Serbian province and to the creation of conditions leading to a lasting and sustainable settlement to the question of Kosovo and Metohija. Serbia highly appreciates the engagement of UNMIK in creating conditions for peaceful coexistence among the residents of Kosovo and Metohija, the security of all local communities, and respect for their human rights. We also appreciate the contribution of other international organizations — including the Kosovo Force (KFOR), the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Mission in Kosovo, as well as the specialized agencies of the United Nations — which, through their missions under United Nations auspices, are a part of the international civil and security presences in the province. In particular, we appreciate the efforts made by Mr. Farid Zarif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, in monitoring the implementation of the UNMIK mandate and coordinating international civil and security presences.

Following the formation of the Government in Pristina, as pointed out in the report before the Council as one of the key political events, Serbia expects that the political vacuum will be filled, which should contribute to the continuation of the implementation of the agreements reached in the Brussels dialogue. We also expect that the continuation of the dialogue at the high level in Brussels on 9 February this year will provide

additional impetus to the process of normalization begun between Belgrade and Pristina.

The Government of the Republic of Serbia is fully committed to the dialogue with the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG) in Pristina. The essence of the process of the normalization of relations is the finding of right answers to the questions that burden the life of the residents of Kosovo and Metohija and prevent them from realizing their basic rights. That can be achieved only through dialogue, based on a genuine understanding of the needs and interests of the other party, and readiness to compromise. I am pleased to note that, in that context, special mention has been made in the report of the visit of Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić to Kosovo and Metohija on the occasion of the celebration of the Orthodox New Year and of his message of the need for life together and the building of a stable future for the Serbian community with its Albanian neighbours. However, a shadow over the visit was cast by an incident involving a group of Albanians who assaulted the motorcade of the highest Government representatives of the Republic of Serbia, which the report before us makes no mention of.

Serbia approaches the dialogue with Pristina openly, desirous of finding practical solutions that will make it possible for all residents of Kosovo and Metohija to lead normal lives within a broader process of European integration. The participation of the Serbs in the political life of Kosovo and Metohija should contribute in that regard. In that context, I would like to point to the participation of the representatives of the Serbian list in the work of the Pristina Government in ministerial and other positions in its institutions.

The Government of the Republic of Serbia has fulfilled conscientiously, consistently and in a timely manner all its obligations emanating from the agreements reached within the First Agreement of Principles Governing the Normalization of Relations, signed in Brussels on 19 April 2013. I express my satisfaction that the importance of the establishment of the community of Serbian municipalities is noted in the current report and defined as the key question in the direct continuation of the implementation of the Brussels Agreement.

Let me point out that the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs), the position of the Serbian Orthodox Church and property issues remain the key questions for the Republic of Serbia in the further dialogue with Pristina.

I take this opportunity to point out that the Government of the Republic of Serbia abides by the other agreement reached earlier on regional representation and cooperation, too. The agreement provides for the scope and manner of the participation of Pristina representatives in regional activities, initiatives and forums. Recently, however, attempts have been made to include the representatives of Pristina in the work of international organizations outside the context of the agreement. Those attempts are unacceptable for Serbia. These questions should be addressed within our dialogue with Pristina.

Serbia welcomes the work of UNMIK in the area of monitoring the status of non-majority communities in Kosovo and Metohija in cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and other missions present in the province.

The Government of the Republic of Serbia attaches great importance to finding a proper solution for IDPs from Kosovo and Metohija. The creation of real conditions for their return is one of the key factors in the process of reconciliation. Unfortunately, even 15 years after the end of the conflict, there exist no conditions for sustainable IDP returns to Kosovo and Metohija, primarily because of the lack of proper interest in this question by the Provisional Institutions in Pristina. This sad fact is noted also in the regular reports of the Secretary-General on the work of UNMIK and in the reports of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Let me remind the Council that Serbia tops the list of European countries with the largest number of IDPs. From Kosovo and Metohija, they number almost 230,000. According to UNHCR data, noted also in the report before us, 17,000 of them, mostly Serbs, are in the province itself. Return to Kosovo and Metohija has been realized by fewer than 5 per cent of IDPs. According to UNHCR data, 12,145 persons returned to Kosovo and Metohija from the rest of Serbia. Only 1.9 per cent — about 4 000 persons — have realized a sustainable return. Seventy per cent of the returnees are not ethnic Serbs. The latest UNHCR data, cited in the current report on UNMIK, confirm the continuity of the decreasing trend and confirm that only 149 persons returned from central Serbia to Kosovo and Metohija in the last trimester.

I would like to point out that the experience gained so far from the work of the Kosovo Privatization

Agency shows that the decisions on the right to property restitution are ineffective — that is, they remain words rather than deeds — as Albanians continue to use Serbian property or to re-occupy it upon eviction without consequences, while Serbs are still unable to repossess it.

Physical insecurity, as evinced by the continued attacks on Serbs and their property and helped by the atmosphere of impunity for crimes committed against Serbs, is surely accountable for the long delay in IDP returns. Illustrative examples in that regard are the numerous security incidents that took place as Serbs from Dakovica — who numbered 12, 000 prior to 1999 — attempted to visit their homes and the town cemetery. One incident involved the 6 January stoning of a bus with about 40 displaced Serbs from Dakovica inside. The only Minister in the Kosovo Government who condemned the incident was Aleksandar Jablanović, which resulted in his dismissal. The violence against returnees, the dismissal of Minister Jablanović and violent demonstrations in Pristina create an atmosphere of hatred towards the Serbian people in Kosovo and Metohija, as well as a feeling of distrust and insecurity. Instead of using the constructive approach of Serbia and its call on the Serbian people to take part in the elections and participate in the Government, Pristina has whipped up a climate of political instability and an anti-Serbian campaign, which is contrary to the goals of the Brussels dialogue. That is borne out also by OSCE data, available in the report before us, on over 230 security incidents that took place in returnee localities from August 2012 to 2014.

The presence of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) is therefore necessary given the still unstable situation, and the number of its troops must not be reduced further. I expect KFOR to continue its engagement in accordance with its current mandate and within its competencies provided for both by the military-technical agreement and resolution 1244 (1999).

In that context, I would like to draw the Council's attention as well to the legal insecurity evinced by a systematic obstruction of the property rights of Serbs, especially displaced Serbs, and the political obstruction of the process of integration of the judiciary organs in northern Kosovo and Metohija, as provided for by the Brussels Agreement.

Serbia considers it its obligation to seek a solution so that conditions could be created for a normal life for all people who did not leave their homes of their own will. Concerned over the slow progress in voluntary returns to Kosovo and Metohija and desirous of intensifying the efforts in this area, the Government of the Republic of Serbia has initiated the establishment of a new consultative body, incorporating the United Nations and other international and regional organizations, as well as the Kosovo Minister for Communities and Returns. The creation of conditions for the Serbian and other non-Albanian populations to enjoy the basic human rights and the rights belonging to them as non-majority populations in Kosovo and Metohija would certainly help improve the general atmosphere for IDP returns.

We condemn each and every desecration of religious sites, of whichever faith. In that sense, I would like to point out that the messages related to the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant "future Caliphate", to the Kosovo Liberation Army and to the Albanian National Army in the graffiti scribbled on the walls of Visoki Dečani, the Serbian Orthodox monastery founded in the fourteenth century and included in the UNESCO World Heritage List, continue to be disconcerting. The reason for our deep concern in that regard is not the mere desecration of a cultural heritage site of world renown, but that it is being desecrated by scribbling messages that glorify terrorists at a time when the international community is making enormous efforts in combating that evil — the biggest threat to international peace and security.

It is with concern that I bring to the Council's attention the continued desecration of Serbian monasteries. In the night of 4 and 5 December 2014, "UÇK" and "Kosovo" graffiti were scribbled on the walls in the churchyard of the Saint Kosma and Damian Church, despite the security provided by the Kosovo Police forces. Let me point out that those acts are not only a threat and an insult addressed to the Serbian Orthodox Church and its clergy, but also a way to intimidate the remaining Orthodox population in Kosovo and Metohija, most of it consisting of Serbs. I take this opportunity to point to the need to introduce additional measures to protect the Serbian cultural and religious heritage in Kosovo and Metohija.

The attacks on these sites are, at the same time, attacks on the identity of Serbs and directly influence their feeling of security and acceptance. The renewed scribbling of graffiti on an endangered cultural site on the UNESCO List of World Heritage Sites brings into question the commitment of the relevant authorities in the province to protecting and preserving Serbian cultural and religious heritage. At the same time, we

have been witness to the unfolding of a parallel process of altering historical facts, aimed at marginalizing and eliminating the presence of Serbs and Serbia from the history of Kosovo and Metohija.

Moreover, let me point out that the need for increased security has recently assumed an additional dimension related to the fight against terrorist threats originating from the worldwide rise of violent extremism. As a sponsor of resoltuion 2178 (2014), the Republic of Serbia has taken all the necessary measures to suppress the financing and organizing of terrorism and the increasing phenomenon of recruitment of foreign terrorist fighters who join armed terrorist organizations in the Middle East, such as Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant. Serbia will continue to act resolutely on the suppression of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We expect the international missions in Kosovo and Metohija and PISG to make their own contributions, within their capacities, to this common fight of ours, which is of global significance.

In the context of the priority that the Government of the Republic of Serbia attaches to resolving property issues in Kosovo and Metohija, I would like to draw the Council's attention to the privatization processes carried out by the Kosovo Privatization Agency, which are contrary to international and European human rights conventions. In addition, UNMIK has determined that the process was contrary to resolution 1244 (1999), as the Kosovo Privatization Agency was not established under the laws in force in Kosovo and Metohija in accordance with the resolution.

Particularly evident is the tendency to privatize public and socially owned companies in the Serbian majority communities. Such companies are being sold to persons of Albanian nationality. I would like to point out that the nationality of the persons who come into possession of the companies is not in dispute; what is in dispute is that the actions involved are unlawful and motivated by the destruction of the economic resources in the Serbian communities. I would like to take this opportunity to raise the ongoing property issue of the Trepça combine: any other solution to this question that differs from the one achieved in the Brussels Agreement would be unacceptable to the Republic of Serbia.

Of particular concern is the attempt of the Pristina Government to adopt, without consultations with the representatives of the Serbian community in Kosovo and Metohija, the law on the amendments of the law on public enterprises. In doing so, it is in breach of article 2 of the coalition agreement on the basis of which the current Government was formed in Pristina. That article provides for halting further privatization in the Serbian communities and an agreement that property issues be discussed in Brussels with the mediation of the European Council and the European Commission. I am convinced that we are all aware of the importance of respect for ownership rights regardless of whether private or public property is involved. In this sense, it is necessary to ensure that all activities in Kosovo and Metohija related to privatization once again take place in the legally valid framework. That is all the more relevant since activities in this area in the southern Serbian province necessarily have an ethnic connotation, which is inadmissible in a democratic world.

I cannot emphasize strongly enough the importance of continued monitoring and assessment of the work of the judiciary and other PISG organs in Kosovo and Metohija, as well as an appraisal of their readiness to take over the executive competencies that the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) now has responsibility for, as provided by the decision on the extension of the mandate and reconfiguration of EULEX taken in June 2014. On a number of occasions, Serbia has pointed out the need for continued monitoring and defining of proper criteria for the appraisal of the work of the Institutions by the relevant missions present in Kosovo and Metohija under the auspices of the United Nations. It is with regret that we note that the current situation in Kosovo and Metohija reflects, in part, the lack of adequate professional capacities on the part of the PISG.

In its *Kosovo Progress Report 2014*, the European Commission expresses serious concerns regarding the independence, accountability and impartiality of the justice system in Kosovo and Metohija. The report also points to the need for more concrete results in the fight against organized crime, corruption, money laundering and terrorist financing. In reporting on the work of first-instance courts in its *Justice Monitor* report for the first half of 2014, OSCE points to shortcomings such as poor or no translation provided in cases involving members of non-majority communities, as well as to the fact that more than half of the decisions have not been fully reasoned.

The chaotic situation in the justice system of Kosovo and Metohija is borne out also by the trial of the former members of the Kosovo Liberation Army charged with

the commission of war crimes in the detention centre in the locality of Kleçka. Additional suspicion about the impartiality of the Kosovo and Metohija justice system is raised by the case of Oliver Ivanović, a political leader of the Serbs who remained in custody for a year before his trial began.

The current situation in Kosovo and Metohija bears out our assessment that conditions have not yet been fulfilled, under resolution 1244 (1999), for a full transfer of competencies to the PISG. That these functions have been entrusted to EULEX does not diminish the powers and responsibility of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. I expect that, within its mandate, EULEX will continue to carry out its executive competencies in the area of the rule of law, in view of the real assessment of the situation in Kosovo and Metohija in that regard.

I take this opportunity to commend the efforts made in the investigation of the allegations contained in the report of Senator Dick Marty on the inhuman treatment of people in the illicit trafficking in human organs in Kosovo and Metohija. I welcome the reference in the report before us on the need to urgently establish the specialist court to try cases arising from the finding of the European Union Special Investigative Task Force.

Serbia is committed to the process of reconciliation. We consider that an important way to confront our own past and, in that context, to establish the fate of missing persons. This is important, first and foremost because of the families of these persons and as a contribution to the process of inter-ethnic reconciliation in the province. To that end, our expert teams cooperate with UNMIK and EULEX, as well as with the competent bodies in Kosovo and Metohija.

The process of inter-ethnic reconciliation is incomplete without the trial of the former members of the Kosovo Liberation Army responsible for the persecution of Serbs, Roma and other non-Albanians, as well as their political opponents among Kosovo and Metohija Albanians. We expect that necessary conditions will be created to try former members of the Kosovo Liberation Army who are suspected of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

In conclusion, let me point out once again that the quest for a lasting and sustainable peace in Kosovo and Metohija is the national priority of Serbia. We can arrive at the solution only through negotiations and dialogue with the PISG in Pristina, fully respecting the legitimate interests of the Albanian, Serbian and other populations in Kosovo and Metohija on the basis of resolution 1244 (1999). The solution to the question of Kosovo and Metohija must be in the interests of our citizens, who should be enabled to live in normal conditions, while a safe life together for all communities should be made possible. In arriving at a solution, we must achieve mutual reconciliation.

That will process will certaily be helped by the adoption of European standards and values as the entire region moves towards the European Union. We believe that the commitment to European integration is the principal driving force behind the normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina. We expect the European Union to continue its active engagement in, and facilitate our dialogue, with Pristina.

I would like to address a call from this Chamber to the political leaders in the province to invest efforts — now that conditions have been created by the ending of the stalemate of the political process in Pristina — to continue the dialogue, primarily in the interests of the population of Kosovo and Metohija. The Government of the Republic of Serbia will certainly maintain its active engagement in the implementation of the Brussels Agreement in the interests of peace and economic progress and reconciliation.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Thaçi.

Mr. Thaçi (*interpretation from Albanian; English text provided by delegation*): Let me first express my gratitude for this opportunity to address the Council at its first meeting this year on Kosovo. Today, I will inform the Council about the progress Kosovo has achieved in recent months and of the commitments of the new Government of Kosovo.

This month marks the seventh anniversary of Kosovo's declaration of independence, the most important act in the people of Kosovo's commitment to freedom and democracy. I can say with pride that the seventh anniversary of independence finds Kosovo as a consolidated State, inside and out. The recognition accorded to my country has shown that the State of Kosovo is an irreversible reality and an indispensable factor of peace and stability in the region. Kosovo has been recognized by all neighbouring countries, with the exception of Serbia, and the vast majority of countries of the region and the Euro-Atlantic community. The Republic of Kosovo has been recognized by 108 countries on all continents. I call upon all States

Members of the United Nations, including members of the Council, to recognize Kosovo and to take the step of joining in the support of Kosovo as an equal and full member of the international community.

Recently, Kosovo became a member of the International Organization of La Francophonie. In December, Kosovo became a member of the International Olympic Committee. Kosovo was granted full membership, ending its international isolation. Our athletes will now have the opportunity to compete in the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

Kosovo has achieved concrete results in its goal of strengthening regional cooperation. The new State has become a member of all relevant regional organizations. In accordance with our policy of strengthening regional cooperation, at the beginning of my tenure I visited Albania, Montenegro and Macedonia to promote good-neighbourly relations and to ensure our mutual commitment to the European future of the region. In late March, Kosovo will host the six Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Balkans, including the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, at a summit in Kosovo. We plan to discuss joint investment opportunities and projects.

We are also continuing to implement the agreements reached in the process of normalizing our relations with Serbia. The process of integrating the four municipalities of northern Kosovo into Kosovo's institutions is now successfully under way. The representatives of citizens who live in the north of the country are now part of the new Government of Kosovo, and they hold ministerial positions. Although dialogue at the political level has been postponed due to the formation of new Governments, first in Serbia and then in Kosovo, the dialogue on technical issues has continued. During this time, we have achieved satisfactory progress in closing the parallel structures of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Serbia in the northern part of our country, while Serbian personnel have been fully integrated into the Kosovo police. We have come to agreements on the implementation of integrated border management and on energy and telecom issues. Finally, we have enabled the collection of custom revenues at border crossings in the northern part of the country.

I must express concern over tendencies on the Serbian side to avoid or delay the implementation of the Brussels Agreement, which indicates that Serbia has not given up its interference in the internal affairs of Kosovo. The report *Dossier: Rudnica*, published last week by the internationally respected Serbian Humanitarian Law Centre, is a very disturbing account. It accuses the current Chief of the Serbian Army of having committed atrocities in Kosovo in 1999 and of hiding in mass graves the bodies of Kosovar civilians killed in Serbia. According to the report, Serbia has never initiated or brought charges against any of the hundreds of officers and police officers implicated in the atrocities. I invite the Serbian leadership to find the strength to deal with the past, and call on the Security Council to request that Serbia heed the report's findings with due gravity.

Earlier this year, we saw an increase in the establishment of Serbian parallel structures, such as the appointment of parallel municipal mayors, including in the municipality of Štrpce, the creation of parallel posts in the Dragaš and Prizren municipalities. We have noted the obstacles faced by the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo and local police in establishing the rule of law and normality in the four northern municipalities, caused by illegal mayors and paramilitary and criminal groups that have hampered the progress of the Serb community in Kosovo during the past 15 years. We have informed the European Union of all such developments, and demanded that Serbia respect the Brussels Agreement in full. I call on the Security Council today to demand that Serbia honour the agreements reached.

The State of Kosovo has shown maturity in consolidating its domestic affairs. One example of that is the political maturity shown by all political actors during the months in which we negotiated the formation of the new Government, following the general elections. Throughout that period, the political parties have shown respect for the laws and institutions of Kosovo. At the same time, the independent institutions, such as the presidency and the Constitutional Court, have shown integrity and professionalism. All that has led to a political agreement that has paved the way for the creation of the new Assembly and the formation of the new Government. The new Government is a comprehensive one in which all communities are represented, including Kosovo Serb citizens who live in the northern part of the country.

This week, Prime Minister Isa Mustafa dismissed a member of the Government who represented the Serb community. He was removed not because of his affiliation, but because he did not show professionalism in undertaking the tasks expected of a representative of

the Government. That incident was used by Serbia to politically attack Kosovo, but Kosovo is an independent country and takes its own decisions independently.

Serbia also attacked Kosovo with respect to the Trepča Mines complex and Serbia's claim to this industrial giant. It should be noted once again that Trepča is the property of Kosovo and Kosovo's responsibility. The solution to the issue was delayed because the Interim Administration in Kosovo was not ready to face the political pressure that the Trepča incident would bring. The institutions of Kosovo have affirmed that Trepča requires a solution in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and with the principle of the privatization of socially owned enterprises in Kosovo that had begun with the United Nations Administration and with the consent of the United Nation Office of Legal Affairs. Trepča is Kosovo's and Kosovo decides on Trepča.

The crucial evidence of Kosovo's success is its completion of negotiations in the stabilization and association process with the European Union (EU). This is recognition of the substantial progress that Kosovo has made in the fields of its economy, democracy and the rule of law.

I would also like to inform the Council of the main priorities of the new Government of the Republic of Kosovo. Together with the new Government's partners, we have created a realistic and ambitious Government programme for the next four years. We are committed to a dynamic executive and legislative agenda that should move the country towards NATO and EU membership. We are committed to economic development as our main focus for the next four years, starting with a series of concrete steps to improve the economic situation and continue the positive trend of economic growth.

At the international level, I want to reiterate that the Government of Kosovo will remain strongly committed to the full normalization of inter-State relations with Serbia and to continue dialogue that will be finalized with mutual recognition. Only that step will enable the building of sustainable peace between the two countries and the establishment of diplomatic and good-neighbourly relations in the European spirit. The commitment will be confirmed in three days, on 9 February, when the first meeting of the new Prime Ministers of the two countries will take place under the auspices of the EU High Representative and Vice-President of the European Commission, Ms. Mogherini.

Kosovo, as part of the Western Balkans and the Euro-Atlantic region, will also continue the process of integration into the European Union as a priority for its social transformation and economic and political development. During its term in office, the Government is committed to concluding the signing of the EU stabilization and association agreement in the first half of 2015 and to begin the implementation of the agreement. The stabilization and association agreement is a contractual relationship between the EU and Kosovo, which will serve to Europeanize our national policies and modernize the country.

Another issue to be addressed is that of the unfair and perennial isolation of Kosovar citizens, who are the only people in Europe that do not have the right to freedom of movement in the Schengen Area. In this respect, a key priority is the implementation of the action plan addressing all the challenges of repatriation, reintegration, document security, border and migration management and overall security and public order. Many Kosovars today are fleeing Kosovo due to the inability to legally migrate to EU countries. Kosovo has been isolated for too long and our young people want have freedom of movement within our continent by any means necessary.

The Republic of Kosovo has consistently shown that it is a responsible actor in terms of its international obligations. In the early days of the formation of the Government, we showed our commitment by finalizing the draft law that prohibits the citizens of Kosovo from taking part in armed conflicts outside the country. Although it is small, our country has shown that it is a partner and ally in the global war against terrorism. We naturally aligned ourselves with the global coalition, led by the United States of America, against the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham, and we will remain active until we have achieved the annihilation of this phenomenon, which has not only hurt the Middle East, but affected European capitals as well. The uncertain world of violence that these terrorists are proclaiming is not a world that we can accept. Therefore, the Republic of Kosovo is on the front lines to eradicate this phenomenon. We know very well what it means to live with terror in a state of systematic violence.

Kosovo this year will also apply to be a full member of the Council of Europe. Today, Kosovars are the only citizens in Europe who cannot seek protection from the European Court of Human Rights. It is going to be a key priority for me to put an end to this exclusion.

Kosovo's goal is to be a place that contributes to collective security, and we are tirelessly committed to strengthening the peace and security architecture in the region and beyond. In this regard, we have undertaken a strategic review of the security sector in Kosovo and are now making coordinated preparations for the transition from the Kosovo Security Force to the Armed Forces of Kosovo. I want to thank the NATO liaison and advising team, which has been very close to us throughout this process. I want to assure the Council that the Kosovo Armed Forces will be a professional and multi-ethnic force, guided by the principles of democratic and civilian control, and will gradually integrate into the Euro-Atlantic framework and be ready to contribute to regional peace and global security.

I would like to inform the Council that Kosovo intends to start a new chapter of cooperation with NATO, moving towards the Partnership for Peace as the main instrument for full membership, through a gradual approach and coordination with our Euro-Atlantic partners.

Let me reiterate that, during the past seven years, the Republic of Kosovo, thanks to the will and commitment of its people, as well as the political leadership and support of the international community, has built stable and durable multi-ethnic and democratic institutions. As a result, Kosovo has become a source of peace and an exporter of stability in the region and beyond. Let me remind the Council once again that Kosovo is one of the most successful State-building endeavours in the United Nations history.

The objectives of resolution 1244 (1999) have been met for quite some time now, and it is time for a new chapter in the relations between Kosovo and the United Nations. Kosovo is forever grateful for the role and contribution of the United Nations in our country's State-building process. However, considering the course of developments since the declaration of independence, the role of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) has been significantly minimized and it now has only a reporting role.

Bearing this in mind and praising Kosovo's achievements in the field of security, economic stability and social and political development, as well as highlighting the agreement reached between Kosovo and Serbia, it is time that the Security Council consider the possibility of a transformation of UNMIK that would help Kosovo align itself with the specialized agencies. We also ask the Security Council to help the Republic of Kosovo in the realization of its aspirations of joining the United Nations as a member with full rights and responsibilities.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Mr. Mangaral (Chad) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. Farid Zarif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, for his statement. I would also like to welcome and thank Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, and Mr. Hashim Thaçi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kosovo, for their statements.

Six months after the holding of parliamentary elections on 8 June 2014, Chad is pleased to note the signing of a coalition agreement between the principal political parties in Kosovo, which allowed the formation of a new Government in Pristina and the establishment of the Assembly of Kosovo. This new momentum will make it possible to overcome the State's paralysis and address the fundamental issues with regard to Kosovo's management and administration.

We welcome the adoption by the Assembly of Kosovo of the law on the Kosovo budget for 2015. Moreover, we note that the municipal budgets in northern Kosovo are also finalized, but are encountering difficulties in terms of taking into account the salaries for health and education personnel. In that regard, we urge the new authorities to promptly reach a solution to this situation.

With regard to security, in particular the transformation of the Kosovo Security Force into the Armed Forces of Kosovo, Chad believes that the new authorities need to find the appropriate space to facilitate the conditions to resolve this issue, while respecting Kosovo's general interests, territorial integrity and sovereignty. We also welcome the new Government's commitment to fighting violent extremism and terrorism through the adoption by the Kosovo Assembly Committee on Internal Affairs of the draft law on the prohibition of joining armed conflicts outside State territory. These efforts and developments are moving forward, as can be seen beyond the national territory. We commend the joint efforts undertaken by the authorities of Belgrade in the process of normalizing the relationship between the two countries.

The constructive technical exchanges in the areas of law, energy and migration, and the recent visits of the Serbian President to Pristina and northern Kosovo, demonstrate the desire to overcome the difficulties in seeking peace and stability in the framework facilitated by the European Union. These political and technical gains will remain tenuous as long as the economic and social situations are not brought under control and stabilized.

According to the report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/74), a number of situations and challenges call for particular attention and firm commitment if we want to bring about lasting solutions to Kosovo's problems. These include, inter alia, the growing number of demonstrations in different regions of Kosovo, which have led to many arrests and discontent. The most recent one was on 24 and 25 January. There are 1,655 cases of disappeared persons and the relevant authorities must address that situation. The establishment of a specialist court to continue the work in the area of war crimes and crimes against humanity is needed. There were more than 17,000 internally displaced persons at the end of 2014 and the number of voluntary returns had declined, according to the information provided by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The movement of illegal migrants increasingly towards Western Europe is a problem.

With regard to the process of disarming the civilian population, the efforts of the local authorities, with the support of United Nations Development Programme, have made it possible to withdraw from circulation more than 1,500 firearms in 2014. The number of incidents affecting religious sites and places of worship has led to the establishment of a monitoring Committee, including all the churches and other denominations, to provide an institutional and collective response to hate speech and graffiti. Lastly, efforts to bring about greater participation of women in political spheres and to strengthen measures for their protection are key.

Chad believes that the democratic process has been launched in Kosovo and that taking into account all the variables will guarantee the building of a democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo. Kosovo will not achieve this new phase without the contribution and persistent and serious work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). We welcome the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Farid Zarif, and his entire team for their commitment to carrying out their mission.

Concerning the accusations of corruption on the part of certain members of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), Chad urges the relevant bodies to investigate them in order to establish responsibility. We have renewed confidence in EULEX, which we believe can continue to oversee the situation and play a role in the area of the rule of law.

In conclusion, we would like to once again commend Pristina for the positive developments concerning national reconciliation and normalization of relations with Belgrade, and to congratulate UNMIK on its commitment to promoting security, stability and respect for human rights in Kosovo and the region, in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999).

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome the participation in today's meeting of Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia. We share the views and concerns he expressed. We have taken note of Mr. Thaçi's statement, and we thank Mr. Zarif for his presentation of the Secretary-General's report (S/2015/74) on the activities of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and his assessment of the situation in the region.

As a result of the internal political crisis in Kosovo that lasted until the end of 2014 — owing to the key parties' inability to form new power structures independently and without outside involvement after the elections to the Assembly of Kosovo, held ahead of schedule on 8 June — the settlement of many pressing issues, both in the region and in the relations between Belgrade and Pristina, has come to a standstill. The situation has once again shown that the facade of Kosovo's political institutions conceals serious problems.

The formation of a coalition ministerial Cabinet that includes representatives of the Serbian community has helped to normalize the situation somewhat. However, on 25 and 27 January the Kosovo Albanian opposition, mainly nationalists, organized anti-Government demonstrations in Pristina that escalated into serious riots and clashes with police and produced dozens of casualties. As a result, political stability has again come under threat. Under pressure from the demonstrators, the Kosovo authorities forced the Minister for Communities and Returns, Aleksandar Jablanović, an ethnic Serb, to resign. In that regard, we support Serbia's to reach a political solution to the Kosovo problem. In the current circumstances, establishing a

mutually respectful dialogue between the parties is one task that cannot be put off. We want to emphasize that unilateral action is unacceptable, and the fomenting of anti-Serb sentiment in Kosovo must end immediately.

We are on the Serbian side regarding the issue of the importance of creating a specialist court to prosecute the egregious crimes committed by the Kosovo Liberation Army during the years of armed conflict. The interim results released by the investigation speak unambiguously to the adequacy of the evidence that has been collected in support of the allegations of multiple murders, kidnappings, rape, unlawful detention, inhumane treatment, trafficking in human organs and desecration of churches. It was such actions that led to the mass exodus of Serbs from southern and central Kosovo, where ethnic cleansing did indeed take place. We call on the Secretary-General to closely monitor the situation concerning the creation of the specialist court and to facilitate completion of the process as soon as possible. It is strange that the establishment of such a body should depend on the enactment of legislative decisions in Pristina, particularly considering the evident weakness of Kosovo's political institutions. Nonetheless, we hope that real progress will be made in that direction in the near future, and that in the end the guilty parties will be punished regardless of the position they occupy. It is vital that all witnesses be duly protected during the course of the trials.

A number of years have passed during which Kosovo has still not seen progress in the areas of justice and the fight against corruption and organized crime, including drug trafficking and trafficking in human beings, as well as freedom of speech and limiting political influence on the judicial system. Recent reports of the European Commission and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe testify to this. Regression in other areas, including the social and economic fields, is clearly apparent. Unemployment is very high, and people are leaving Kosovo en masse in search of a better life.

Inter-ethnic tensions remain acute, yet we see no concrete steps being taken to bring those responsible for anti-Serb actions to justice. The ongoing desecration of Orthodox monasteries in the region, including the Visoki Dečani monastery, a jewel of the world's cultural heritage, is seriously disturbing. On 6 January, the eve of Orthodox Christmas, a bus carrying Serbian pilgrims, refugees from the town of Gjakovë/Đakovica who were trying to visit a church there, was stoned. Clearly, in such circumstances Serbs from Gjakovë/Đakovica cannot expect to return to their homes they abandoned there. Indeed, as the data from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees shows, the already weak rates of refugee return are falling, while the outflow of representatives of national minorities is growing. The mere existence of legislation guaranteeing their rights is therefore not enough; it must be strictly monitored.

We note Belgrade's constructive attitude and its continued readiness to maintain contacts with Kosovo Albanian representatives. We believe that the planned resumption of a high-level political dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina in the next few days will enable progress to be made on key issues on the agenda concerning the creation of the association of Serbian municipalities in Kosovo. The fact that the agreement on this, reached way back in April 2013, has gone unrealized has had a negative effect on interaction between the ethnic communities in the region.

Kosovars' participation in conflicts in the Middle East, including in the ranks of Islamic State and other radical organizations, should continue to be firmly suppressed. We call on Pristina to be more active in countering the spread of extremist ideas and the fomenting of terrorism, using its recently passed legislation. We assume that the issue will continue to be a focus of attention for UNMIK.

The United Nations Mission is still the chief international presence in Kosovo. The European Union's mediation of the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina and the transfer of UNMIK's rule-of-law functions to the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo do not imply a reduction of the role of the United Nations in the region. Considering the wide range of problems that exists, we call on the United Nations Mission to fulfil its mandate fully, in principle and proactively. In order to that it must clearly be in possession of all the necessary resources and personnel. We categorically reject any attempts to devalue UNMIK's role and call on the Kosovo Albanian side to cooperate fully with the United Nations presence.

Russia's position on the question of Kosovo and Serbia's territorial integrity is unchanged. Resolution 1244 (1999) retains its full force and remains essential to the entire international legal basis for the settlement in Kosovo. In that regard, we do not support any proposals that in any way modify the review cycle for

settling the Kosovo issue in the Security Council. The prerequisites for that are not ready yet.

Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank Mr. Farid Zarif, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his briefing.

Spain considers the role of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), in accordance with its mandate as established by resolution 1244 (1999), to be very important. UNMIK makes a crucial contribution to promoting and preserving stability in the region and acting as a link between the various international presences on the ground. That is clearly expressed in the most recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/74), which emphasizes UNMIK's active role and the important part it plays in preventing and reducing tensions and in promoting cooperation among local authorities, particularly North and South Mitrovica. For that reason I would like to reaffirm Spain's support for UNMIK and Mr. Zarif. I would also like to express our appreciation for the statements made by Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, and by Mr. Hashim Thaçi.

After a long hiatus, a new high-level meeting on the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, facilitated by the High Representative of the European Union, is scheduled to take place, and that is clearly good news. Spain offers its constructive support, without prejudice to our principled position, for the High Representative's efforts to foster that direct dialogue in order to produce concrete results that benefit the whole population. I wish to acknowledge in that regard the commitment that the authorities in Belgrade and Pristina have shown thus far, as well as the openness and constructiveness of their participation in the dialogue. We encourage both parties to continue to participate in the process with the same positive attitude.

Spain welcomes the agreements reached throughout the process, but also believes that it is essential that dialogue continue with political commitment and work at the technical level in order to move ahead in the implementation of the still pending provisions of the 19 April 2013 Agreement. It is important to make quick and decisive progress on three fronts: in the justice sector, property rights and the full establishment and entry into functioning of the association/community of Serb municipalities pursuant to the Agreement.

In another vein, in the area of security, we listened closely to Special Representative of the Secretary General Zarif's briefing, which brought us up to date specifically on the recent violent episodes and protests, which were also alluded to in the Secretary-General's report. Unfortunately, we cannot yet speak of total reconciliation or a satisfactory integration among the different constituent communities, which is seen, for example, in the persistent incidents involving religious sites, the ongoing decrease in the number of voluntary returnees and the absence of conditions needed to adequately reintegrate returnees in their communities. There is also an ongoing contrast between legislation that has made nominal progress in the area of human rights and the rights of minorities and, at the same time, a practical application thereof, which is not yet at the level of international and European standards.

I wish to also highlight the work performed by the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo. The Security Council acknowledges that work and appreciates it. Economic governance issues and rule-of-law issues are two areas where reforms are needed as a matter of priority.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate Spain's commitment to the European perspective for the Western Balkans. We believe that progress made towards this shared objective will allow for the definitive stabilization of the region and the economic and social progress for its inhabitants. That necessarily requires, however, a high level of political commitment and concrete work from all stakeholders, each in their areas of responsibility.

Mr. Lucas (Angola): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Farid Zarif, for presenting the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (S/2015/74). We welcome His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, and thank him for his statement. We also welcome Mr. Hashim Thaçi.

Angola's position is that resolution 1244 (1999) continues to be the applicable legal framework for reaching a comprehensive solution for Kosovo through dialogue and negotiations on the basis of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant Security Council resolutions. We therefore support the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Serbia and understand the legitimate concerns of that country on the Kosovo issue.

We would like to underline the fundamental role played by the United Nations in Kosovo through the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in promoting security, stability and respect for human rights, and its cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Kosovo Force and European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo.

I shall now focus on four main issues: the key political developments, human rights, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and missing persons.

On key political developments, the European Union-facilitated dialogue at a high-level of leadership between Belgrade and Pristina appears to be crucial for moving forward in the implementation of the outstanding provisions of the 19 April 2013 Agreement. In that regard, we commend the Government of Serbia for its readiness to engage in the dialogue. Some progress has been achieved at the technical level in setting arrangements for the travel of Serbian and Kosovo officials. However, additional progress is expected once political talks resume at a higher political level in the implementation of agreements on the judiciary, energy, crossing points and the freedom of movement. We share Belgrade's concern over the announced intention of the Kosovo authorities to transform the Kosovo Security Force into the Kosovo Armed Forces in violation of resolution 1244 (1999).

With respect to human rights, we welcome the organization by UNMIK, supported by UN-Women and the United Nations Development Coordinator, of an "Open Day on Women, Peace and Security in Kosovo", marking the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and the recognition of survivors of sexual violence in the relevant Kosovo legislation. Another relevant idea was the Common Voice Forum a multi-ethnic initiative that brings together representatives from all of Kosovo's communities for the advancement of inter-ethnic dialogue, conflict prevention and civic awareness. However, the full implementation of the legal framework continues to be hindered, as the report underlines, by a range of institutional factors, including inefficient coordination, overlapping mandates, insufficient financial allocations and limited accountability measures.

On internally displaced persons, we regret that by the end of 2014 there were more than 17,000 internally displaced persons in Kosovo and that the number of voluntary returns continues to show a declining trend, with the unresolved issues regarding property and a lack of effective enforcement of the courts' decisions as the key obstacle to the increase of returnees. We recall in that regard the request made by the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of the internally displaced persons following its mission to Serbia, including Kosovo, to the competent authorities of Kosovo, especially the provision of protection, security and safety for returning IDPs to their places of origin.

On the issue of missing persons, we commend the responsible authorities in Belgrade and Pristina for their continued efforts to pursue new sources of information and carry out investigations with respect to 1,655 remaining missing persons from 1988 to 2000.

In conclusion, we are encouraged that the overall security situation in Kosovo remained stable during the reporting period, thereby highlighting that UNMIK continued to be active in its facilitation role between communities and officials and with international organizations, particularly focused on efforts aimed at preventing and reducing tensions and promoting cooperation between local authorities.

Finally, we commend the work carried out by UNMIK under the leadership of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Farid Zarif, in the promotion of security, stability, the rule of law and respect for human rights in accordance with the Mission's mandate.

Mr. Haniff (Malaysia): I thank Mr. Farid Zarif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), for his briefing. My delegation welcomes His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, and His Excellency Mr. Hashim Thaçi, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kosovo, and thank them both for their statements.

Malaysia joins other countries in welcoming the recent formation of the Government in Kosovo, following the legislative elections in June of last year. After a six-month delay, we applaud the power-sharing agreement between the coalition parties, based on a spirit of compromise and inclusiveness. We commend the key role played by President Atifete Jahjaga in facilitating that outcome, as well as her unwavering efforts to engage with the political leaders in Kosovo.

With the formation of the coalition Government, we call on all parties to close ranks and work closely together, based on the collective responsibility to a democratic, stable and prosperous future. We also take note of the agreement between the coalition parties to establish the association of Serb municipalities within several months' time, and look forward to seeing progress on that long-contentious issue.

Malaysia fully supports the normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia and welcomes the resumption of the political dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade, facilitated by the European Union (EU) in Brussels, next week. Despite the stalled dialogue at the highest level, due to the delay in the formation of the Kosovo Government in the second half of last year, Malaysia is pleased to note that the EU-led dialogue has nevertheless continued at the technical level.

In December 2014, Serbia's Constitutional Court declined a request made by the Democratic Party of Serbia to review the constitutionality of the 19 April 2013 First Agreement of Principles Governing the Normalization of Relations between Serbia and Kosovo. Given the Court's decision, Malaysia hopes that all parties in Serbia and Kosovo will remain committed to, and ensure the full implementation of, the agreements signed by their Governments under the auspices of the European Union in Brussels. Indeed, that is the only way forward towards a better common future for both Serbia and Kosovo.

Malaysia also wishes to see progress in the establishment of a specialist court, agreed to between Kosovo and the EU, to try cases arising from the findings of the EU Special Investigative Task Force last year. Progress in establishing the specialist court to try possible crimes against humanity is vital in promoting reconciliation and closure among the communities in Kosovo.

Malaysia welcomes the stable security situation in Kosovo, as reported by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Zarif. We fully support the important role played by UNMIK to promote security, stability and respect for human rights in Kosovo and the region. We also welcome the continuing mandate of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo to further strengthen the rule of law and the judicial institutions in Kosovo towards the path of European integration.

Based on the report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/74), from October 2014 to January 2015 a number of peaceful demonstrations were held in Kosovo, mainly to protest against prevailing social and economic conditions. Malaysia hopes that the new Government will take heed of the demands of its citizens for political, social and economic reform to improve their living standards.

Malaysia welcomes the ongoing cooperation among the religious communities in Kosovo, including in protecting cultural and religious heritage. Such cooperation could serve as a bridge in building confidence and trust among the religious communities in Kosovo. We strongly condemn any attempt to spread hate and instigate interreligious violence, including by desecrating cultural and religious sites.

As a multiracial and multireligious country, Malaysia has its share of difficulties and challenges in ensuring a united, stable and prosperous country. We believe that the value and practice of moderation is crucial in bridging differences, as it calls for mutual respect, acceptance and understanding among the various groups.

We also need to prevent political, social and economic marginalization in order to ensure unity and stability in a multi-ethnic society. In that regard, Malaysia stands ready to support Kosovo on its path towards nation-building, inclusive democracy, reconciliation and economic progress.

Mr. Tatham (United Kingdom): I thank the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Kosovo, Mr. Farid Zarif, for his briefing today. I also welcome First Deputy Prime Ministers Dačić and Thaçi to the Security Council.

Since the Council last met in this format (see S/PV.7327), only two months ago, we have witnessed welcome progress in Kosovo. The formation of a new Government in Pristina in December, after a long gap, marks an important step forward following free and fair elections throughout the territory of Kosovo in June of last year. With the key institutions now in place, we look forward to the new Government enacting the reforms highlighted in the European Commission's annual *Kosovo Progress Report 2014*. There is much for the new Administration to take forward, including economic development and the rule of law, ensuring greater independence of the judiciary and tackling organized crime and corruption.

The formation of a new Government is also a chance to bring renewed momentum to the European Union (EU) facilitated high-level dialogue. The Governments of both Serbia and Kosovo have shown welcome commitment to that process, and we wish them every success in their first meeting of 2015, next week. I welcome the strong commitments to this process that we have just heard from First Deputy Prime Ministers Thaçi and Dačić in their statements this morning.

Continued progress at the working level will be vital. I am pleased that the Secretary-General's report (S/2015/74) notes that some progress was made in the technical-level dialogue in December. The normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia is integral to both countries' European Union accession paths.

We also welcome the new Government's commitment to establish judicial proceedings for the investigation into the allegations reported by the Special Investigative Task Force. As the Secretary-General makes clear in his report, that will be an important step forward for the new Government. We urge them to ensure that relevant laws are passed to enable that.

I join the representative of Angola in commending the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, supported by UN-Women and the United Nations Development Programme, on women and peace and security, including the holding of an open day to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

We also welcome the adoption of the Kosovo action plan for implementing resolution 1325 (2000). In that context, the legislative provision made for survivors of sexual violence during the Kosovo conflict is an important step. Women and peace and security and the prevention of sexual violence are rightly important priorities of the Council, and it is heartening to see these issues being addressed in Kosovo.

While the Secretary-General's report underlines the continuing stability of the overall security situation in Kosovo, the violence in Pristina during recent protests is a matter of concern. We all support the right to peaceful protest, but Government authorities and the opposition in Pristina must do all that they can to avoid violence and escalation. It is vital that the Government and the international community in Kosovo continue to engage with the opposition to address the underlying causes of the protests, including the economic situation.

The report of the Secretary-General also prompts us to note the need for continued focus on tackling ethnically motivated incidents. We urge all political and community leaders to work towards creating greater cooperation in and between communities, tackling issues from the past and reconciliation.

Later this month, we will mark the seventh anniversary of Kosovo's declaration of independence. It is an important moment to reflect on the progress Kosovo has made. It is also a chance to recognize the progress made in the international community. Since 2008, well over half of the States Members of the United Nations have recognized Kosovo, including many of its neighbours in the Western Balkans.

Thanks to the historic agreement reached with Serbia in 2013, Kosovo now has a strong foundation for cooperation with Belgrade and for negotiations on EU membership. In addition, Kosovo has secured access to funding from the international financial institutions and will compete in the 2016 Olympic Games, having gained membership of the International Olympic Committee. We welcome that progress. It demonstrates that Kosovo's independence is irreversible. We encourage those countries that have not yet recognized Kosovo to do so.

Precisely because of that level of progress, the United Kingdom reiterates its view that it is past time to adjust the frequency of these meetings to reflect the new realities on the ground. The situation does not, in our view, merit quarterly meetings. The Council must recognize and adapt to progress, particularly when there are so many genuine challenges to international peace and security confronting us. In practice, these meetings see largely predictable exchanges of well-known positions by Council members. The format tends to lead to the accentuation of differences between the two countries at a time when our shared goal should be to inject momentum into the EU-facilitated dialogue. We would like to see less talk in New York and more action in the EU-facilitated dialogue.

Mrs. Schwalger (New Zealand): I thank Special Representative Farid Zarif for his report, and welcome Deputy Prime Ministers Dačić and Thaçi to today's debate.

New Zealand believes long-term stability and security will come from an inclusive and democratic Kosovo that respects the rights and interests of all its citizens. It will come from genuine reconciliation among

its various communities and from the maintenance of constructive and cooperative relations between Pristina and Belgrade. The Secretary-General's latest report (S/2015/74) outlines the encouraging progress that continues to be made in all those respects.

While the primary responsibility for that lies with the parties themselves, the international community continues to have an important role to play in providing the necessary conditions for progress. We commend and support the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo and of Special Representative Zarif in facilitating conditions for building cooperative relations between Kosovo's communities and the important ongoing role of regional partners, including the European Union (EU) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. We, the Security Council, also need to play our part in those efforts, including through support for a resumption of high-level dialogue between the parties.

New Zealand welcomes the formation in December of a new Government and the constitution of the Kosovo Assembly, which brings to an end a lengthy period of political uncertainty. The broad representation of Kosovo's communities in the new coalition Government demonstrates just how far Kosovo has come. We hope that recent security incidents will prove to be isolated events and that the inclusive nature of the Government remains unchanged.

We also welcome the announcement of the resumption of high-level talks between Kosovo and Serbia, beginning next week. The EU dialogue is an important mechanism for enabling progress, and we commend Belgrade and Pristina for their positive approach. Maintaining a positive approach will be important to ensure the full implementation and outstanding provisions of the 19 April 2013 agreement.

Long-term reconciliation between Kosovo's various communities will require the resolution of the outstanding questions concerning missing persons and further progress on displaced people and facilitating voluntary returns. We acknowledge the positive steps taken with regard to the latter and encourage attention to addressing the obstacles to returns identified in the Secretary-General's report.

We echo the Secretary-General's call for the establishment of a specialist court to try cases arising from the work of the EU Special Investigative Task Force. It is important that the court be — and is seen to be — objective and impartial.

Finally, New Zealand encourages further efforts to strengthen rule of law institutions in Kosovo, including through promoting judicial independence and measures to tackle corruption and organized crime.

Mr. Barros Melet (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. Farid Zarif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), for his briefing on the current situation in Kosovo. We also thank Mr. Ivica Dačić, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, for his presence and statement. We welcome the statement made by Mr. Hashim Thaçi.

We welcome the election of the new Government of Kosovo on 9 December. We hope that the spirit of cooperation and collective responsibility that prevailed in that process persists as the Government tackles new challenges such as the economic development of Kosovo, the fight against organized crime and corruption, and the establishment of the rule of law.

Regarding the security situation, we are concerned about the news regarding recent violent events in Pristina. However, despite disturbances and tensions, we note positively that the security situation in Kosovo remained generally stable and police forces in Kosovo responded appropriately to the circumstances to restore order. In that respect, we highlight the work and the central role that UNMIK continues to play in promoting security, stability and respect for human rights, which is a priority for making progress in reconciliation between communities.

We also congratulate the Kosovo authorities on their adoption of the draft law prohibiting the participation of Kosovo in foreign conflicts. We hope that those changes can be coupled with improvements in the living conditions of the citizens of Kosovo, strengthening public confidence in the democratic process and dissuading them from leaving their country to participate in foreign conflicts.

To conclude, I would like to stress that resolution 1244 (1999) continues to be in full force as the internationally accepted legal basis for resolving the situation in Kosovo, including strict respect for the principle of territorial integrity. We look forward to the conversations that will take place in Brussels on

9 February between Belgrade and Pristina, and we hope that the parties will continue to implement the agreement of 19 April 2013 to continue the process of normalizing their relations.

Mr. Ramírez Carreño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this Security Council briefing on Kosovo. We welcome the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Farid Zarif, and we note with appreciation the report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/74) on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). We also welcome the participation of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, Mr. Ivica Dačić, and the statement made by Mr. Hashim Thaçi.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reiterates that full adherence to international law — non-intervention, respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence of States, and the peaceful settlement of disputes — is critical to the maintenance of international peace and security. In calling for a peaceful solution to the question of Kosovo, Venezuela believes that resolution 1244 (1999) remains the internationally accepted legal basis applicable to this dispute, aimed at finding a general solution through political negotiation. In that regard, we call for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Serbia to be guaranteed.

Our country supports the resumption of dialogue and negotiations between Serbia and the local authorities in the province of Kosovo, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, in order to achieve a mutually acceptable solution between the parties. An important step in this direction was the establishment of the Kosovo Assembly and the establishment of a new Government in Pristina.

We note with cautious optimism that security on the administrative border of Kosovo remains stable, although certain incidents have been reported since the most recent Council meeting on this issue (S/PV.7327), held in December 2014. We appreciate the positive role played by the United Nations through the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo by promoting security, stability and respect for human rights, as well as its cooperation with the Kosovo Force and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), under the auspices of the Organization.

The mediation of the European Union between Belgrade and Pristina and the transfer of functions from UNMIK to EULEX do not, in our view, undermine the work being done on the ground. We hope that such missions will continue, on the basis of their respective mandates, to play a constructive role in achieving an appropriate solution to the Kosovo issue. However, we note with concern reports that some senior officials of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo have been implicated in acts of corruption. We hope that Mr. Gabriele Meucci, in his efforts as Head of EULEX, and the independent legal expert Mr. Jean-Paul Jacqué will continue, in a fair and transparent manner, to carry out their assigned task to clarify the facts and thereby pursue their work to promote the rule of law in Kosovo. Moreover, we encourage interested parties to intensify their joint efforts in the process of clarifying the situation of missing persons, and we thank EULEX for its forensic cooperation in this matter. We also urge the speedy establishment of the specialist court to investigate allegations of crimes against humanity committed during the armed conflict.

Venezuela rejects terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as well as the spread of extremism. In this regard, we note with appreciation the steps being taken in Kosovo to prevent the recruitment of persons as foreign terrorist fighters to participate in armed conflict in Syria and Iraq. However, we urge the authorities to remain highly vigilant in this matter of extreme sensitivity in terms of security.

We attach great importance to the full respect of the human rights of displaced persons and minorities, as well as to their right to return to their places of origin so that they can fully enjoy their human rights free of discrimination. However, we are concerned that incidents continue to occur against Kosovo Serb citizens in certain areas, and we therefore call for appropriate measures to be taken to remedy this situation and prevent persecution and hostility on the basis of ethnicity or religion.

We are further concerned that the sale of businesses and property in Kosovo undermines the rights of the Kosovo Serb minority and may become yet another factor impeding the return of the displaced to their homes. Illegal actions against cultural and religious heritage have given rise to serious incidents between

the two communities that hinder the process of peace and dialogue in Kosovo. We encourage both parties to work together to prevent a recurrence of such acts, which endanger peace and dialogue in the region.

Finally, we call on all parties to redouble their efforts to find a peaceful, just and lasting political solution within the framework of international law, including full compliance with resolution 1244 (1999).

Mr. Bertoux (France) (*spoke in French*): I wish to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary General, Mr. Farid Zarif, for his briefing and the Foreign Ministers of Kosovo, Mr. Hashim Thaçi, and Serbia, Mr. Ivica Dačić, for their statements.

Just two months after our most recent debate in the Security Council on the situation in Kosovo (see S/PV.7327), we note the revival of the general political landscape with the formation on 9 December 2014 of a coalition Government in Pristina and the imminent resumption of political dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo. The successful elections of 8 June generally met the expectations of the Council. We welcome the fact that the parties have finally been able to take responsibility for finding a solution, in accordance with the Constitution and democratic principles, to the political deadlock that prevailed between June and December. Now that the uncertainty related to the elections have lifted, we will remain particularly attentive to the rapid resumption of political dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. The new Heads of Government, who will meet for the first time in Brussels on Monday, should give new impetus to the process of normalization of relations between the two countries.

We encourage the parties to engage in dialogue and remind them that time is not on their side. In any political process, regular progress is needed to reflect the constantly renewed commitment of each. In this regard, we hope that the agreement on justice can be endorsed on Monday. In addition, we will continue to pay particular attention to the establishment of the association/community of Serb municipalities in northern Kosovo. It must have real teeth and should be adapted to Kosovo law. It will be a key milestone in the implementation of the Agreement of 19 April 2013.

Similarly, we expect Kosovo to take the necessary measures to establish the specialist court to follow up the work of the Special Investigative Task Force of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, which is looking into allegations of the crimes committed 15 years ago. We send our best wishes to Mr. David Schwendiman, the successor of Chief Prosecutor Williamson, leading the Task Force.

We have no doubt about the willingness of Kosovars to engage in a judicial process that is essential to the fight against impunity and will address all aspects of the difficult times experienced by Kosovo in the late 1990s. We note too that progress has been made towards the the establishment of competent criminal courts. In that respect, we again count on the commitment of the political parties in Pristina to taking this process to its conclusion and to fighting generally in favour of strengthening the rule of law. It is in the light of progress in these two areas in particular that the Council will be able to assess the positive evolution of the situation in Kosovo.

Today, I want to return to the situation of the Kosovars, who are increasingly choosing exile in the face of the difficulties they are encountering in their daily lives, in particular employment-related economic problems. The entire Kosovar political class must heed those who are voting with their feet, and fight the organized crime networks that contribute to the growth of illegal immigration. The viability of Kosovar society and the stability of the Balkans and the European Union are at stake. We will remain vigilant vis-á-vis the general living conditions of the populations in Kosovo, and encourage the parties to ensure respect for the rights of persons belonging to minorities. Restoring a relationship of trust between communities remains the only way to allow Kosovo and Serbia to open a new page in their history. In that regard, demonstrations cannot be allowed to degenerate into violent confrontations, and all extremist rhetoric must be banished from the public forum.

I conclude by commending the joint march of Kosovo and Serbia towards the European Union. Important steps have been taken in that direction. Serbia has made substantial institutional changes, and we welcome its achievements. The technical negotiation process for accession to the European Union, formally launched on 21 January 2014, continues. We now hope that the efforts of Serbia will be recognized and that a first negotiation chapter can be opened soon.

The European Commission has welcomed the commitment of Pristina to concluding its stabilization and association agreement. We hope that the agreement will be finalized very soon. It is important that the progress made by both parties proceed at the same

pace so as to prevent any delay in one from slowing the progress of the other. We express the hope that Serbia and Kosovo have again moved a little closer to their common future.

Mr. Hmoud (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Farid Zarif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), for his comprehensive briefing. I would also like to welcome Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister of Serbia, and Mr. Hashim Thaçi, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kosovo, whom I thank for their statements.

First of all, we congratulate Kosovo on having formed its Government, which we hope will fulfil the aspirations of the people of Kosovo. Achieving the promise of its policies and overcoming the problems that existed in the course of setting up the current Government require greater efforts from the authorities and genuine, responsible actions to improve the political atmosphere prevailing in Kosovo. Stabilizing the political environment will contribute to a stronger State, leading to the economic and social development that the citizens of Kosovo deserve.

Good-neighbourly relations and respect for sovereignty and the individual characteristics of each State by the other countries of the region are the most important elements in ensuring stability and prosperity for the Balkans in general. We therefore call on the two neighbours —Serbia and Kosovo — to continue with the full implementation of the agreements reached bilaterally, including the Brussels Agreement. We also call for strengthened cooperation in all areas. We welcome the announcement of next week's resumption of the high-level dialogue sponsored by the European Union. We hope that the meetings will be successful and lead to the full normalization of bilateral relations between the two States.

Jordan welcome's Kosovo's adoption of a law to criminalize participation in foreign conflicts. This will contribute to improving the domestic security situation in Kosovo and help preserve stability in the region.

The progress and positive steps taken by Kosovo on all fronts in general, and specifically on the rule of law and human rights, are a testament to the will of the people of Kosovo to consolidate the institutions of a modern State, thereby proving to the world that they are able to live up to their responsibilities. All of those efforts strengthen that stature of Kosovo on the international level.

In that connection, one of the most important features of a modern secular State is its ability to treat all citizens equally and without discrimination. We therefore encourage the authorities in Kosovo to step up their efforts, in particular in the areas of modernizing the legislative system with regard to autonomy for minorities so as to ensure their rights, thereby strengthening efforts at reconciliation among all members of society. Minorities must be protected from all attacks and against any attacks on their religious, cultural and historical institutions or property.

Jordan reiterates its call for strengthened relations between Kosovo and the international community, including facilitating its accession to various international organizations. Efforts must be made to not hinder Kosovo's accession to such bodies. We also reiterate our support for extending the reporting period of the reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of UNMIK, given the stability of the situation in Kosovo.

We emphasize the importance of the activities carried out by the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, which is helping the country to modernize and build the State. We express our gratitude to UNMIK's leadership and staff for their efforts to discharge their mandate, which throughout the years has led to an improvement of the situation in all areas.

Mr. Pressman (United States of America): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Zarif for his briefing. We welcome Foreign Ministers Thaçi and Dačić back to the Security Council.

I commend both countries for their continued dedication to the normalization of relations. We particularly welcome Kosovo's continuing integration into the community of States, as demonstrated by its participation in regional meetings and forums in recent months. Specifically, we congratulate Kosovo on its recognition by the International Olympic Committee, and look forward to seeing Kosovo's athletes competing under the Kosovo flag in Rio de Janeiro in 2016.

The United States welcomes the successful formation of a Government in Kosovo in December 2014. Although the process took time, it represents the first democratic transition of political authority resulting from free and fair elections across the entirety of Kosovo's territory. This coalition Government and

the process that led to its formation demonstrated the resilience and vitality of Kosovo's democratic and political institutions. The United States appreciates the leadership of President Jahjaga in helping to facilitate the political dialogue that led to the formation of the Government in accordance with Kosovo's Constitution.

The new Government, which includes representatives of minority communities, has been tested over the past month by violent protests and by the separation from Government service yesterday of the Minister for Communities and Returns. The importance of a fully representative, fully participatory and multi-ethnic Government and Parliament cannot be understated.

With respect to the protests, let us be clear: all citizens have the democratic right to protest, but violence is illegal and unacceptable. We condemn all acts of vandalism to public and private property, and the intimidation of journalists and television crews. All citizens of Kosovo should exercise their democratic rights, and they should do so legally and responsibility.

We encourage the new Government to move quickly to address the socioeconomic challenges in the country. Economic growth and new employment opportunities will demonstrate to the citizens of Kosovo, regardless of ethnicity, that they have a prosperous and free future at home, thereby stemming the tide of migration out of the country. Additionally, we encourage efforts by Kosovo to undertake the measures necessary to encourage the return of those displaced, both internally and outside of Kosovo, as a result of the conflict, including by adjudicating property claims and enforcing court decisions.

We will continue to urge Serbia, Kosovo and all States in the region to increase cooperation at their shared borders. Such cooperation will advance the rule of law, increase security and counter criminal activity, including smuggling and trafficking in persons.

We again condemn the actions of those who seek to oppose the work of building inclusive democracy in Kosovo by committing acts of violence of by sowing tension, mistrust and fear among communities. The use of violence against religious pilgrims, as we unfortunately saw in Gjakova/Đakovica on Orthodox Christmas, is clearly unacceptable. All sides must guarantee the freedom of movement for local populations. To that end, the Kosovo Force and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo continue to exercise indispensable roles in facilitating a safe and secure environment.

The United States notes the visit of Prime Minister Vučić to Kosovo in January, and the cooperation of Kosovo authorities to provide protection. That act was another step towards the normalization of relations. The European Union-facilitated Kosovo-Serbia dialogue and the implementation of the April 2013 Agreement continue to be critical elements of building a strong, inclusive and multi-ethnic democracy in Kosovo. We welcome next week's high-level meetings in Brussels and we hope that the session on Monday will lead to concrete progress that will directly benefit the citizens of both countries.

The United States commends Serbia and Kosovo as well for their work in combating foreign terrorist fighters, as demonstrated by their attendance at the first ministerial-level plenary session of the counter-Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant coalition, held in Brussels in December. Kosovo's dedication to that effort is also apparent in the recent work to arrest and prosecute foreign terrorist fighters in Kosovo and by the introduction of a law to criminalize participation in such activity.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that, while the United States believes that the situation in Kosovo remains an important issue and and there is much work to be done to advance the dialogue, there is important work to be done to discuss issues critical for long-term stability, reconciliation and development in the region. There is little, however, that such regular briefings contribute to those issues. We reiterate our preference that the Council extend the reporting period for the Secretary-General to every six months.

Mr. Sarki (Nigeria): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Farid Zarif for his briefing on the recent developments in Kosovo. I also acknowledge the presence of His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, and His Excellency Mr. Hashim Thaçi, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kosovo.

Nigeria notes the Constitution of the Assembly of Kosovo and the formation of a new coalition Government in Pristina. The Government's inclusive nature is a sign of progress in the implementation of the normalization Agreement. With the Government and Parliament in place, Kosovo's leaders now have the

institutional framework to continue with the political and economic reforms that were stalled by months of political stalemate.

Nigeria acknowledges the efforts of the Kosovo authorities to prevent their citizens from becoming foreign terrorist fighters. The approval of the draft law on the prohibition of joining armed conflicts outside State territory is a significant step in that direction. It is our hope that this legislation, which penalizes the recruitment and participation of Kosovars in foreign armed conflict, will be effective in dissuading potential recruits. Preventing extremism, however, is not a task for the authorities alone. That is why we commend Kosovar religious leaders for their efforts at reaching out to Kosovar youths with a message that discourages extremism and radicalization.

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons represents an ongoing security challenge for Kosovo, as it does in our region. The situation calls for strengthened measures to control the illicit flow of such weapons. The legislative framework developed by the authorities for weapons regulation and control is a step in the right direction. That led to the removal of over 1,500 fire arms from circulation in 2014. Nigeria commends the authorities for that achievement and encourages them to intensify their efforts.

In order to achieve lasting reconciliation in the region, it is essential that residual issues awaiting attention by the authorities be promptly addressed. To that end, the Parliament should take urgent steps to enact the legislative and constitutional changes required for the efficient functioning of the specialist court on post-war atrocity crimes. Similarly, it is important that a transparent and credible judicial process be put in place to adjudicate the allegations in the Dick Marty report. That would facilitate a broad public understanding and help to build consensus around the adjudication process. Likewise, the disposal of assets and the privatization of corporations should be guided by extant laws and regulations and be conducted in a transparent, impartial and credible manner.

The role of United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo remains vital to the promotion of security and stability in Kosovo. We commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and his team for the efforts they are putting into the fulfilment of their mandate.

Mrs. Jakubonė (Lithuania): I welcome to the Council Deputy Prime Ministers Ivica Dacic of Serbia and Hashim Thaci of Kosovo, and I thank them for their statements. I also thank Mr. Farid Zarif, Special Representative and the Head of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), for his briefing.

Over the past few years, positive developments in the region have been hard to miss. A new Government of Kosovo was formed through dialogue and democratic processes. We welcome its strong commitment to build a democratic, peaceful, prosperous and multi-ethnic Kosovo. We call for cooperation and collective responsibility further to prevail when resolving numerous open issues in the country, notably in the light of recent protests on the ground. The new Government and the Assembly need to build on the Kosovo's reform agenda, strengthen the rule of law, including judicial independence, and fight against organized crime and corruption. We call to complete the necessary steps concerning the establishment of the specialist court to try cases stemming from the findings of the European Union Special Investigative Task Force without further delay.

Lithuania remains a staunch supporter of Kosovo's European aspirations. We look forward to the finalization of the atabilization and association agreement between the European Union (EU) and Kosovo and encourage making progress on the visa liberalization dialogue. We also commend the Kosovo Government on the recent adoption of the action plan for the implementation of the recommendations of the European Commission progress report.

Next week, the EU-facilitated dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina is to take place in Brussels. We welcome the commitment of both parties to continue seeking progress on their way in the normalization process. We encourage both sides and their leaders to show the decisiveness necessary for the common European future and to engage actively in further implementation of the First Agreement of Principles Governing the Normalization of Relations, signed on 19 April 2013, translating the Agreement into results on the ground and building trust among the communities.

We reiterate our support for the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX). We note its important role on the ground in the fight against organized crime and corruption, the prosecution of war crimes and the fight against impunity. Again, my

delegation wishes to remind the Council that over a year ago Audrius Šenavičius, a Lithuanian officer serving in EULEX, was killed while on duty in northern Kosovo. We ask the competent authorities to provide information on the progress of the investigation.

We commend the solidarity Kosovo authorities have demonstrated in the fight against terrorism. We welcome the adoption by the Kosovo Assembly of the law on the prohibition of joining the armed conflicts outside State territory.

Finally, I wish to reiterate our view that debating the UNMIK report twice times a year, instead of quarterly, would be a reasonable step forward to acknowledge the progress in the normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina and the stability in Kosovo.

Mr. President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of China.

I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Zarif, for his briefing. I welcome His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, for his presence and statement today. I also listened attentively to the statement by Mr. Thaçi. China respects Serbia's sovereignty and territorial integrity and understands its legitimate concerns over the question of Kosovo.

Resolution 1244 (1999) represents an important legal basis for the resolution of the Kosovo question. China has always maintained that it is imperative to follow the policies and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and within the framework of the relevant Security Council resolutions to carry out dialogue and negotiations to reach a proper settlement that is acceptable to the parties concerned. China appreciates Serbia's active effort in search of a political settlement of the Kosovo question and welcomes and supports the continuation of pragmatic and constructive dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina to implement the agreements already reached by the two sides on energy and the exchange of personnel. Thanks to the joint efforts of the various parties, the security situation in Kosovo is generally stable. We encourage the two sides to continue to push ahead with the dialogue process and to seek a lasting solution of the Kosovo question in order to safeguard the security and stability in the Balkans and Europe region at large.

China appreciates the work undertaken by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) under the leadership of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Zarif, and supports UNMIK in continuing to implement its Security Council mandate. We hope that the international presence, including UNMIK, the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo and the Kosovo Force, will step up its coordination and play a positive and constructive role in promoting an appropriate settlement of the Kosovo issue.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7378

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7378th meeting
Friday, 6 February 2015, 12.25 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Chad	Mr. Mangaral
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	France	Mr. Bertoux
	Jordan	Mr. Omaish
	Lithuania	Mrs. Jakubonė
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mrs. Schwalger
	Nigeria	Mr. Sarki
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Tatham
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

The situation in Mali

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15-03337 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 12.25 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Mali

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Mali to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Council has before it the text of a statement by the President on behalf of the Council on the subject of today's meeting. I thank Council members for their valuable contributions to this statement. In accordance with the understanding reached among the members of the Council, I shall take it that the members of the Security Council agree to the statement, which will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2015/5.

It is so decided.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7379

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7379th meeting

Thursday, 12 February 2015, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Mangaral
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	Malaysia	Mr. Haniff
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

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15-03929 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, Sweden, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Turkey to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2015/100, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Angola, Armenia, Australia, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, France, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, Spain, Sweden, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, Chad, Chile, China, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2199 (2015).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the adoption of the resolution.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to convey our gratitude to our colleagues in the Security Council for the constructive approach and effective cooperation they demonstrated during their work on resolution 2199 (2015), which was just adopted. We would also like to thank all the delegations that sponsored the resolution, initially submitted to the Council by the Russian Federation. We believe that this type of case clearly shows the need to use collective efforts to resolve the issues we face.

Having adopted resolution 2199 (2015), we have taken yet another important step in suppressing the financing of terrorists, first and foremost through the illegal trafficking of oil, and in suppressing the terrorist threat faced by Syria, Iraq and other States in the Middle East, whose impact is felt far beyond the borders of the region.

Ms. Power (United States of America): Today the Security Council has adopted a robust Chapter VII resolution to counter the threat posed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the Al-Nusra Front and other individuals and entities associated with Al-Qaida. The unanimous vote in favour of resolution 2199 (2015) shows our joint commitment to confronting violent extremist groups that threaten our collective security and the human rights that the United Nations was created to defend.

The United States strongly supports today's resolution, which is part of a comprehensive strategy to degrade and ultimately destroy ISIL. The strategy also includes the coordinated efforts of many nations to conduct robust military operations to degrade ISIL's military capabilities, enact tougher laws and foster better cooperation to stop the flow of the foreign terrorist fighters who fill ISIL's ranks, and to counter the violent ideologies that attract people to ISIL and help fuel the group's attacks.

In recent weeks and months, we have seen what this strategy can yield. Together with partners, we are degrading ISIL's leadership capabilities, knocking out oil fields, refineries and other associated infrastructure that ISIL controls, and supporting troops on the ground as they fight to recapture terroritory from the group, as was achieved in Kobani. As a result of these and other efforts, ISIL is having a harder time generating the new funds needed to carry out its operations. Today's resolution aims to make that effort even more challenging by using sanctions and other punitive tools to target three ISIL income streams.

First, the resolution provides States with clear, practical instruction for how to cut off ISIL's illicit oil smuggling. United Nations sanctions already require States to stop that trade, but resolution 2199 (2015) also presses States to step up their efforts to prevent and disrupt the movement of vehicles going to and from areas controlled by ISIL and the Al-Nusra Front so as to stop the flow of assets traded by the groups, whether oil, precious metals and minerals, or refining equipment.

Secondly, by imposing a new ban on the trade in smuggled Syrian antiquities, the resolution both cuts off a source of ISIL revenue and helps to protect an irreplaceable cultural heritage of the region and the world. To help stop that trade, the United States has sponsored the publication of so-called emergency red lists of Syrian and Iraqi antiquities at risk, which can help international law enforcement catch antiquities trafficked out of those countries.

Thirdly, the resolution reinforces the existing prohibition in United Nations sanctions on all payments and donations to ISIL, the Al-Nusra Front and other Al-Qaida affiliates, including ransoms, which perpetuate a cycle of horrific brutality, giving those groups resources to carry out more murderous and incentivizing them to take more people captive. The devastating consequences of such kidnappings and abductions have been felt by families, communities and whole nations in recent weeks and months.

Lieutenant Muath al-Kaseasbeh, the Jordanian pilot executed by ISIL, was just 26 years old when he was murdered. A devout Muslim, in his last conversation with his wife he reminded her to pray and told her that he had performed a double prayer for martyrs.

Kenji Goto, age 47, a Japanese journalist executed by ISIL, had gone to Syria to search for a kidnapped colleague and friend, Haruna Yukawa, who was also killed. Kenji spent his life writing about conflicts. An award-winning children's book he wrote in 2006 — *I Want Peace Rather Than a Diamond* — told the story of a former child soldier in Sierra Leone.

Kayla Mueller, a 26-year old American, had been drawn to the region to alleviate the suffering of Syrians, volunteering to work with refugee children in neighbouring Turkey. In an interview before she was abducted by ISIL and later killed, she said: "For as long as I live, I will not let this suffering be normal, something we just accept."

The loss of people like Muath, Kenji, Haruna and Kayla deepens our resolve to eradicate the violent group that cut their lives short. At the same time as we applaud the Council's resolute action to address the threat posed by ISIL, we lament the Council's persistent failure to address one of the main factors that led to the group's rise. There is no better recruiting tool for ISIL than the atrocities of the Al-Assad regime, which has dropped barrel bombs on civilians, used chemical weapons on its own people, and tortured tens of thousands more in its prisons.

We regret that we were not able to show the same unity we have shown today in adopting the critically important resolution on ISIL when it came to the crimes of the Al-Assad regime. So just as we condemn the monstrosities perpetrated by ISIL, we must also continue to condemn the brutality of the Al-Assad regime, which has long since lost the legitimacy to lead, and reject the arguments of those who claim that we must partner with the regime to effectively confront violent extremists. As the war in Syria grinds on, we renew our call on the Council to press for the political solution needed to end the tremendous suffering of the Syrian people.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): Resolution 2199 (2015) demonstrates the Security Council's continuing determination to tackle the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), specifically targetting its means of financing. It primarily focuses on oil sales, but also covers other sources of ISIL income, including from kidnapping for ransom, the elicit trade in antiquities, natural resources and financial transfers.

The swift agreement of the resolution shows the strong and continuing unity of the Council on countering terrorism. There is a disturbing body of evidence that Al-Qaida groups such as ISIL are generating significant

income from the sale of oil, kidnapping for ransom, and the looting and smuggling of cultural heritage items from Iraq and Syria. The resolution contains measures to constrain ISIL's ability to fund its campaign of terror. It targets the sale of oil by ISIL and the supply of oil-producing equipment to ISIL. It calls on States to prohibit the trade in Iraqi and Syrian cultural property that has been illegally removed.

We are pleased to have played an important role in ensuring that the resolution was comprehensive in confronting all sources of terrorist financing, and we look forward to working on full and effective implementation following this unanimous show of support for the resolution.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): France was severely struck by terrorist attacks in January. Far from laying us low, the attacks have strengthened our resolve to fight terrorism in all its forms, and to develop the international means and instruments available to do so. Yesterday, the presence of French Minister of Justice Christiane Taubira and her presentation to the Counter-Terrorism Committee clearly illustrated our determination. Our co-sponsorship of resolution 2199 (2015) is yet another demonstration thereof.

Following upon resolution 2170 (2014), the text we have just adopted strengthens the obligations incumbent upon States, including in the following fields. It condemns all trade, direct and indirect, in particular of oil and associated materials, with the targeted terrorist individuals and entities, under pain of sanctions. States will have to inform the competent United Nations committee of any transfer on their territory of oil or associated materials to or from those groups. The resolution condemns the destruction of cultural heritage, including religious heritage, in Syria and Iraq. States will have to take measures to prevent the illegal trafficking of cultural goods, including archeological artifacts. It condemns the kidnapping and exploitation, including sexual exploitation, of women and children.

For all these reasons, France will remain mobilized in the fight against terrorism at all levels, be it military, a political solution to the conflict, or financial.

Mr. Hmoud (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): Jordan welcomes the adoption of resolution 2199 (2015), which will help to cut off the sources of funding for the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and affiliated terrorist groups. We must fight ISIL with all tools available under international law. Resolution 2199 (2015) is one such tool. The international community must pool its efforts to fight the funding of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Jordan will be on the front line in fighting this phenomenon and these terrorist groups, including ISIL. The martyrdom of the pilot Muath Al-Kaseasbeh makes Jordan even more resolved to persevere in these efforts.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of China.

China welcomes the Security Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 2199 (2015), which is of great significance for the coordination of the international community's fight against terrorism and for supporting efforts by the countries concerned to combat terrorist organizations.

China opposes all forms of terrorism. We also oppose double standards in fighting terrorism. And we oppose linking terrorism with specific religions and ethnicities. We hope that the international community will comprehensively and fully implement resolution 2199 (2015), as well as resolutions 2170 (2014) and 2178 (2014), and jointly combat and contain terrorism.

China calls on the international community to attach greater importance to the use of the Internet by terrorist organizations in engaging in terrorist activities. Pursuant to the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, the international community should enhance cooperation, implement policies in an integrated manner and cut off all the channels through which terrorist organizations use the Internet to broadcast terrorist and violent videos, spread extremist ideologies, recruit personnel, mobilize funds and instigate, plan and carry out terrorist activities.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7380

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7380th meeting

Thursday, 12 February 2015, 10.25 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Mangaral
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	Malaysia	Mr. Haniff
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Letter dated 16 January 2015 from the Vice-Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/31)

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15-03935 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda.

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Letter dated 16 January 2015 from the Vice-Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/31)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Sudan to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2015/97, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United States of America.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/31, which contains the text of a letter dated 16 January 2015 from the Vice-Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005), concerning the Sudan, addressed to the President of the Security Council.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, Chad, Chile, China, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2200 (2015).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the adoption of the resolution.

Ms. Power (United States of America): Last November, the Security Council was confronted with reports of an alleged mass rape in Thabit, a town in North Darfur, the Sudan. The United Nations peacekeeping mission in Darfur attempted to investigate, but was systematically denied meaningful access. The one time the peacekeepers were permitted to reach Thabit, Sudanese military and intelligence officials refused to let them interview alleged rape victims in private, and in some cases recorded the interviews. To this day, the Government of the Sudan has shamefully denied the United Nations the ability to properly investigate the incident, despite the Council's mandate for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) to do precisely that.

Yesterday, a report released by Human Rights Watch alleged that at least 221 women and girls were raped in an organized attack on Thabit over a period of 36 harrowing hours, beginning on 30 October 2014. According to the report, Sudanese soldiers went door-to-door looting, beating and raping inhabitants. Over 50 current and former residents provided testimony corroborating the crimes, as did two reported army defectors who separately told Human Rights Watch that their superiors had ordered them to rape women.

Because the Government of the Sudan denied the United Nations a proper investigation, we have to rely on organizations such as Human Rights Watch to gather witness and perpetrator testimony and to shine a light on what happened. One woman told Human Rights Watch that soldiers entered her home and said, "You killed our man, we are going to show you true hell". Then, she said, "They started beating us. They raped my three daughters and me. Some of them were holding the girl down while another one was raping her. They did it one by one". Two of her daughters were younger than 11 years old, she said. Many of the witnesses interviewed told Human Rights Watch that Government officials had threatened to kill them if they told anybody what happened.

Nearly 10 years after the Security Council adopted resolution 1591 (2005), with the aim of protecting civilians in Darfur and stopping the violence there, the horror of Thabit is just one attack in one place out of too many to count. In 2014 alone, more than 450,000 additional people were displaced in Darfur — the highest number of new internally displaced persons (IDPs) in any year since 2004 — adding to the approximately 2 million people already displaced. In the first six weeks of this year, humanitarian organizations estimate an additional 36,000 people have been driven from their homes in North Darfur state. people living

in areas afflicted by violence are in desperate need of humanitarian aid; yet obstruction, harassment and direct attacks by the Sudanese Government have made them increasingly hard to reach.

Two weeks ago, Médecins sans frontières shut down its operations in three states in the Sudan, including two in Darfur, citing "the Government's systematic denial of access" to communities in the greatest need. In one example Médecins sans frontières cited, the Government of the Sudan prevented its emergency workers from travelling to the IDP camp in El Sireaf in Darfur, where the organization said residents did not have enough drinking water to survive. Médecins sans frontières also suspended operations in South Kordofan state, where its hospital was bombed by a Sudanese Air Force jet.

Today we renewed the mandate of an important United Nations Panel that monitors the sanctions imposed by the Council — sanctions that the Government of the Sudan continues to flout. The Government and armed groups it supports routinely violate the arms embargo, a fact that they openly acknowledge. They continue to launch deliberate attacks on civilians, as well as on UNAMID peacekepers. According to the Panel of Experts, between December 2013 and April 2014 alone, 3,324 villages were destroyed in Darfur. And the Sudanese Government continues to allow individuals subject to sanctions to travel and access their finances.

Today we renewed a sanctions-monitoring Panel that has provided thorough, independent monitoring of the Government of the Sudan and other armed groups in Darfur, with a resolution that is more forward-leaving than its predecessors. But even as we take this important step, we are reminded that the sanctions regime is impotent when the Sudanese Government systematically violates it and the Council cannot agree to impose sanctions on those responsible for the violence and the abuses. Nonetheless, today's resolution 2200 (2015) matters. It speaks to our deep concern about the ongoing violations. It presses the Government of the Sudan to take the long-overdue steps necessary to protect the people of Darfur and stop the violence. For the first time, in condemns the violence perpetrated by the Government-backed Rapid Support Forces — the heirs to the janjaweed — and urges the Sudanese Government to account for the situation of civilian populations that are suffering from devastating waves of attacks in North Darfur, like the reported mass rapes at Thabit.

Yet encouraging as it is to see some very modest improvements to today's resolution on renewals, the most important measure of our efforts will be our ability to alleviate the immeasurable suffering of the people of Darfur, and on that front the Council and the international community have failed. Our complacency is deadly for the people of Darfur, so perhaps today, with a slightly more robust sanctions resolution, we can reignite the Council's engagement in this continuing crisis. People's lives depend on it, and so does the credibility of the Council, because our ability to promote international peace and security depends on our ability to keep our word and implement the measures we impose. We need to do that, because for every Thabit we know about, there are so many more villages that have been the victims of unspeakable atrocities over the past decade in Darfur. They demand that we find a way to stop this, and we must.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I call on the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Hassan (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I am very surprised at the statement made by the representative of the United States, constituting as it does a blatant attempt to once again make erroneous accusations before the Security Council. As you are aware, Mr. President, those accusations were first made by Radio Dabanga, and for those who do not know about it, Radio Dabanga was created by a non-governmental organization based not in Darfur but in Amsterdam. Radio Dabanga encourages the rebel movements that reject the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, and those movements have repeatedly refused the Council's demands that they accept it. We have informed the Council of those refusals numerous times, to no avail.

The Council requested that the rebel groups accept the Doha Document after the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) visited the region and made a report that completely exonerated the Sudanese Government. But the members of the Council rejected the report because what they had asked for was a report from UNAMID indicting the Government. Since, however, the report's facts told a different story, it was rejected. Previously, we expected the Council to consider UNAMID's reports credible. This time, the UNAMID report exonerated the Sudanese troops in the village of Thabit. Furthermore, the Government of the Sudan did not refuse the mission access, and it was able to reach the site. If it had been able to reach the site and found that it could not make

an investigation, it should have returned and reported its inability to carry out an inquiry owing to a military presence there, but that was not what happened. The Mission reached the site and made a report. Since the report exonerated the Government of the Sudan, it was rejected.

I am therefore very surprised to hear the representative of the United States mention Human Rights Watch, which has often spoken of the massacre or genocide of whole peoples. Every time the Council deals with information from organizations or the press that it characterizes as so-called unverified reports, it rejects them. But since this time we are talking about the Sudan, the great Powers accept such reports. Human Rights Watch is not an independent organization. The role it plays in the Sudan is well known, and it is not impartial. Regarding the indications in the report concerning Médecins Sans Frontières, as long ago as 2009 I spoke to the Council about Médecins Sans Frontières, asking that it leave the Sudan, since we knew it was involved in activities relating to Sudanese national security and espionage information. This latest report of Human Rights Watch to the Council is similarly fabricated. We do not and will not recognize reports made by organizations that persist in undermining the Sudan and its Government and whose positions are well known.

Concerning the report under discussion today (S/2015/31), I am grateful to the States that have cooperated with us in efforts to reach a balanced representation that includes the positive developments in Darfur and the phases of implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. Regrettably, the resolution that has just been adopted (resolution 2200 (2015)) does not reflect those positive developments, which raises a question. UNAMID has twice undergone a strategic review, and its troop numbers have been twice reduced, first the military component and then the police. Now we are seeing the Department of Peacekeeping Operation's second application for a strategic review and implementation of the Mission's withdrawal. We were expecting a report that reflected the positive developments in this important phase for peacebuilding in Darfur.

At the same time, we were struck by the paragraphs introduced into today's resolution by countries wishing to see peace, such as those that invite the rebel groups to participate in the peace process without preconditions and warning them against making any attempts to alter the balance of power by the use of force. In that regard, we reiterate the commitment of the Sudanese Government to the peace process, to achieving stability in Darfur, and to the inclusion of all the rebel groups, in accordance with its policy of inclusive national dialogue begun by the President of the Sudan in January 2014. Under that initiative, we have given assurances to the leaders of all the rebel movements to encourage them to join the peace process. All such assurances made it clear that their participation would be free, honest and under no pressure in order to ensure the inclusion of each and every citizen in the political process.

The resolution adopted today refers to intercommunal fighting. The numbers cited by the representative of the United States show that such tribal violence has had disastrous effects on civilians. Several paragraphs of the resolution are devoted to violations of international humanitarian law. I would like to point out that tribal violence is a historical issue that goes back a very long way. We have talked about its causes in the past. Some paragraphs do commend the efforts of the Sudanese Government and its cooperation with UNAMID in order to contain the tribal violence and address its causes.

With regard to the part of the resolution that mentions external military links with armed groups, we emphasize that we do not associate with militias. Units such as the Rapid Support Forces are similar to units that exist throughout the world, not just in the Sudan.

Furthermore, we would like to express our reservations about the provisions of the resolution that compromise our sovereignty, which is guaranteed by the Charter of the United Nations. The Sudan is a completely sovereign nation. We are committed to protecting our territory and our citizens. Resolution 1591 (2005) and subsequent resolutions that renewed the mandate of the Panel of Experts should not undermine our rights as a sovereign nation. We have the right to possess all tools to preserve and protect our national security, sovereignty and our citizens.

With regard to the Panel of Experts and what has been said about my Government's failure to cooperate, none of that is true. The reports of the Panel of Experts refer to the Government's cooperation with the Panel. I therefore do not understand these unfounded accusations. If the Panel itself speaks of the Sudanese Government's cooperation, why then are there accusations?

The Government of the Sudan has taken the unique step of appointing a senior official, General Mohammad Mustafa Al-Dabi, to lead a committee established precisely to implement resolution 1591 (2005). He has been mentioned in all the reports of the Panel. The committee includes relevant officials from various Ministries, such as the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, who were appointed to facilitate the work of the Panel of Experts.

We challenge the Council to name a single instance where we have obstructed the Panel or where we denied it access to Darfur or any other province of the Sudan. That simply has not occurred at any point during our period of cooperation with the Panel of Experts. The Council should acknowledge our cooperation because we are well aware that other groups of experts in other countries have not enjoyed the same level of cooperation that my Government has shown to the Panel of Experts.

Finally, given that this an extremely important phase in our national dialogue and in our efforts to include rebel groups in the political process, I would request that the Security Council fulfil its role and exert pressure on the rebel groups to join in the political process — today, not tomorrow — so that we can achieve peace.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7381

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7381st meeting

Thursday, 12 February 2015, 10.45 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Mangaral
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	Malaysia	Mr. Haniff
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

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15-03941 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Qatar and Yemen to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Jamal Benomar, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Yemen, to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome Mr. Benomar, who is joining today's meeting via video teleconference from Sana'a.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to warmly welcome the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, to whom I now give the floor.

The Secretary-General: We have all been following recent developments in Yemen with the deepest concern. As the Security Council knows, I have just returned from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Preventing civil war in Yemen was the main political subject of my discussions with the leaders of the two countries.

I met with the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, His Majesty King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud; the Vice-President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashed Al Maktoum; Gulf Cooperation Council Secretary-General Abdul Latif Al Zayani, and many other leaders. They all expressed to me their serious concern that the situation in Yemen may get significantly worse unless we take more determined and concerted action. In particular they called for a strong and unmistakable signal to be sent to all parties that further acts aimed at undermining the transition would not be allowed to stand. I briefed them on the latest efforts by my Special Adviser on Yemen, Mr. Jamal Benomar. We agreed to work together even more closely going forward. I take this opportunity to highly commend Special Adviser Benomar for his leadership, hard work and commitment to facilitating the political negotiation under very dangerous circumstances.

Let me be clear: Yemen is collapsing before our eyes. We cannot stand by and watch. The country is facing multiple challenges. A dangerous political crisis continues in Sana'a. President Abdrabuh Mansour Hadi, Prime Minister Khaled Bahah and Government ministers and other State officials must be granted the freedom of movement.

I am concerned by reports of excessive use of force to disperse peaceful demonstrators and of the use of arbitrary arrest and detention of civil society activists and journalists. I call for the protection of human rights, especially the rights to peaceful assembly and to the freedom of expression.

There have been more widespread and lethal attacks by Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, with increasing hostilities between that groups and the Houthis in various provinces south of Sana'a, such as Damar and Al Baydah.

There are increasing secessionist tendencies in the south, and an acute humanitarian crisis. An astounding 61 per cent of the population — almost 16 million people — now need humanitarian assistance in Yemen. These developments threaten regional and international peace and security.

Given these troubling circumstances, we all have a solemn obligation to live up to our commitments under the Charter of the United Nations. We must do everything possible to help Yemen step back from the brink and get the political process back on track.

Yemen's transition has an agreed road map. All parties must abide by the common framework as set forth in the Implementation Mechanism of the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative, the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference and the Peace and National Partnership Agreement. I expect them to refrain from any further provocations and to implement these agreements in full and without any further delays. To that end, my Special Adviser is facilitating negotiations with all sides on a consensual and peaceful way forward, under very difficult operational circumstances. All Yemeni parties must engage in the negotiations and cooperate in good faith.

I also call on the members of the Security Council to provide their continued unified support to the facilitation efforts of my Special Adviser. I also urge all

members to work closely with the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council and other international partners to take confidence-building steps with the Yemeni sides to de-escalate tensions and pave the way for a peaceful way forward through political negotiations.

First and foremost, our focus must be on helping the Yemeni people to re-establish legitimate Government authority as soon as possible. At this time of crisis, I also call on Member States to increase their funding for the 2015 humanitarian response plan. Such support will be more urgently needed than ever before. This will be essential for preventing an escalation of the conflict and creating the basis for reverting to a peaceful political transition, which I firmly believe is the only way forward.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Benomar.

Mr. Benomar (*spoke in Arabic*): The Security Council has made every effort to support a peaceful, negotiated transition in Yemen. Over the past three years, I have repeatedly warned the Security Council about the dangers facing the transition process. Today, I deeply regret to inform the Council that the transition, which was widely heralded as a model, is now in disarray.

Over the past few weeks, Yemen has witnessed dramatic events. I have already briefed the Council twice in the past three weeks. I will therefore not repeat what I have already said, but will instead provide a factual account of events since my last briefing on 26 January.

I have continued exercising the good offices of the Secretary-General by convening negotiations on a daily basis involving 12 political parties, including Ansarallah, with a view to finding a consensual solution to the current political impasse. As mediators, we must maintain both our unique access to all sides and our principled position as framed by the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Today we are navigating multiple minefields. There have been ups and downs. Nevertheless, reasonable progress has been made, with all sides cognizant of the need to swiftly find a solution to restore public confidence.

In parallel to the negotiations under way, Ansarallah organized a large three-day gathering in Sana'a that concluded on 1 February. The gathering ended with an ultimatum to conclude the United Nations-facilitated negotiations within three days or else revolutionary committees would take action. The 4 February deadline passed without incident, and the negotiations moved ahead.

The United Nations-facilitated negotiations were adjourned in essence late on the evening of 5 February, with broad understanding among the parties on the general contours of an agreement. The parties decided to utilize the next day, 6 February, to resolve outstanding issues through bilateral consultations and to enable the United Nations to prepare a compromise text. The plan was then to reconvene on 7 February with the aim reaching a conclusion on an agreement.

However, on 6 February, in a surprising move, Ansarallah took unilateral action. They organized a gathering of their supporters at the Republican Palace and made a so-called "constitutional declaration". That declaration pronounced that Parliament would be dissolved, a five-member presidential council would be formed and that a supreme revolutionary committee would run the country temporarily.

The unilateral declaration has created strong backlash domestically and internationally. Major political parties have rejected it. The prevailing political uncertainty and heightened security risks have prompted key diplomatic missions to close and to withdraw temporarily from Yemen.

I have made it crystal clear that I deeply regret the unilateral action taken by Ansarallah, in particular when good progress had been made in the negotiations. As a representative of the Secretary-General, I have also made it clear to all parties, including Ansarallah, that the current political impasse can only be solved through peaceful dialogue and negotiations, based on the Implementation Mechanism of the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative, National Dialogue Conference outcomes and the Peace and National Partnership Agreement.

I consulted with the political parties. I also had direct contact with Mr. Abdul Malik Al-Houthi, who assured me that he welcomed a consensus-based negotiated solution through United Nations facilitation. I am pleased that all agreed to resume the negotiations. Since the beginning of this week, we have been meeting on a daily basis, and progress has been made. We are still in the middle of delicate negotiations. Under discussion are complex issues regarding governing

arrangements during the transition period, including both executive and legislative authorities. The parties are considering power-sharing measures in a new Government of national unity and mechanisms and arrangements for enabling State security institutions to re-assume their responsibility. In addition, the parties are debating the means of preventing an outbreak of hostilities in Ma'rib, and undertakings to ensure the protection of fundamental human rights, such as the rights to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression, among others.

The situation in the oil-rich province of Ma'rib is very tense. Many Yemenis fear that confrontation between the Houthis and tribesmen could break out at any time. In the south, the situation is volatile. Southerners, who have suffered from many years of discrimination and marginalization, have become more assertive, with many demanding separation.

The current instability is creating conditions conducive to the re-emergence of Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula. Even more concerning is the prospect that Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula might establish a foothold in parts of Abyan, Shabwah, Hadramawt and Ma'rib. Today, Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula has seized control of the 19th Infantry Brigade camp, which houses a large arsenal of ammunition and heavy weapons, in Bayhan and Shabwah.

The political uncertainty has created serious pressure on the local currency, the riyal. If no political settlement is secured in the coming days, a real possibility exists that the riyal may collapse. Serious concerns exist that the Government may be unable to pay salaries in the next two to three months. That, in turn, could prompt either a default on payments or an increase in money supply — that is, money printing that would cause severe devaluation and hyperinflation. Should that happen, the current poverty rate of 54 per cent would increase further, and private sector activities would be severely affected. Indeed, many donors already have halted development aid, and others are considering such action. That, in turn, would cause most capital expenditures to cease and basic service delivery to be interrupted, and tens of thousands could lose their jobs. That could further impact the security situation, with those unemployed joining armed groups for monetary and financial reasons, and contribute to a worsening of Yemen's humanitarian needs.

An estimated 15.9 million people — or 61 per cent of the population — need humanitarian assistance. The humanitarian response plan for 2015 is being finalized this week and will request some $748 million dollars to meet the needs of 8.2 million people. Of that requirement, $285 million is for urgent life-saving and protection assistance to the most vulnerable Yemeni people. Humanitarian partners are concerned about a possible expansion of conflict and the impact that would have on the civilian population. The increased political instability and risk of conflict could also complicate humanitarian efforts to develop durable solutions and sustainable livelihoods and to facilitate Yemen's progress towards recovery.

The transition has encountered serious obstacles in the past, yet time and again Yemenis have managed to forge ahead. Today, Yemen is at a crossroads: either the country will descend into civil war and disintegrate, or it will find a way to put the transition back on track. That largely depends on the political will of Yemeni leaders. They all bear responsibility for the current status of affairs and for finding a way to pull the country back from the brink.

The political, humanitarian and security environments pose serious challenges for United Nations operations. Nevertheless, the United Nations will not leave Yemen. The United Nations reaffirms its commitment to Yemen as it seeks to complete its political transition. In that regard, we have been consulting and coordinating closely with the Gulf Cooperation Council and other international partners.

Yesterday marked the fourth anniversary of the start of the peaceful demonstrations demanding change. It was the courage of the young demonstrators that opened the way for Yemenis to start a path to democratic transformation. Despite all the setbacks, failures and obstacles, that dream is still alive. Yemenis can still achieve it. The Security Council and the international community have a responsibility to support them in these difficult times.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Benomar for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Yemen.

Mr. Alyemany (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): Four years ago, on 11 February 2011, demonstrations took place in all Yemen's provinces. The demonstrations grew, demanding a change and the creation of a legitimate modern secular State founded on the basis of the rule of law, respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights. Since then, my country has experienced a

great deal of turbulence and a great many crises, which could have plunged the country into anarchy were it not for the grace of God, the support of our countrymen and the limitless support offered to us by friendly countries.

The United Nations was present from the very outset, through the good offices deployed by the Secretary-General and his Special Adviser, Mr. Jamal Benomar. He was able to organize very complex negotiations with all political components and factions that led to the signing, on 23 November 2011 in the brotherly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Initiative and Implementation Mechanism.

As the Council knows, the Initiative enabled Yemen to avoid plunging into chaos. All components of society have committed themselves to working through a period of transition that should enable us to recreate a secular, federal Yemeni State. The inclusive National Dialogue Conference, one of the main components of the GCC Initiative, enabled us to unite all political, cultural and social components around one negotiating table. The 10-month dialogue resulted in the well-known outcome containing the recommendations of the National Dialogue Conference, which represent all the desired objectives the Yemeni people. After the National Dialogue Conference ended, varying interpretations of those elements emerged, giving rise to differences among the various political components, although the latter were able, on 21 September 2014, to forge the Peace and National Partnership Agreement.

But the situation has deteriorated. His Excellency President Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi was forced to resign, which led the various political components to engage in consultations under the auspices of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General to reach a consensus solution that would be acceptable to all parties. On 6 February, developments in the situation encouraged all parties to act responsibly by granting priority to the national interests, and to agree that consultations would resume on 9 February. That was certainly necessary as dialogue is the only possible way for Yemen to extricate itself from the potential crisis.

We certainly appreciate the very constructive role played by the Secretary-General through his Special Adviser, Mr. Jamal Benomar, working alongside all political components to achieve a consensus solution to ensure that the country does not plunge into the abyss. God preserve us from that. Yemen should not be turned into a hotbed of tension, threatening the region and the world. The situation could lead to civil war, which would not benefit Yemen, the region or the world. Consultations among Security Council members should rapidly lead to measures that would enable us to move forward towards achieving national consensus and advancing the transition period.

I am compelled to refer to the very serious humanitarian situation being endured by Yemenis. In addition to hundreds of thousands of refugees from the Horn of Africa and regions affected by conflict within the country, millions of Yemenis live below the poverty line. Statistics show that nearly 60 per cent live in poverty, with record levels of unemployment, pushing Yemen to the very brink of humanitarian catastrophe. We invite the international community to provide the necessary humanitarian assistance for Yemen in 2015. Yemen is commited to providing all necessary protection to diplomatic and consular missions. We cherish the hope that the friendly countries that have closed their embassies in Sana'a will resume their presence there as rapidly as possible.

In conclusion, I call upon the Security Council, all our brotherly States of the GCC, all States that have sponsored the Initiative, and all friends and brothers of our country to continue to back the political process, in keeping with the GCC Initiative and Implementation Mechanism, the Peace and Partnership Agreement, and the outcome of the National Dialogue Conference to guarantee peace, security and stability, which will contribute to the stability of the region and the world as a whole.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Qatar.

Ms. Al-Thani (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the States members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) — the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Sultanate of Oman, the State of Qatar and the State of Kuwait — I should like first to congratulate you, Mr. President, on China's accession to the presidency of the Security Council for this month, and to thank you for convening this meeting in order to respond to the dangerous developments in Yemen. I also thank Mr. Jamal Benomar, Special Adviser of the Secretary-General, for his briefing and all his efforts to achieve a political transition and strengthened stability in Yemen.

The events that have unfolded in recent weeks are dangerous and unprecedented because the coup against the legitimate Government in Yemen undermines the

political and peaceful transition. It goes against the highest interests of the people in Yemen at a time when the country is facing economic and development problems. Indeed, the current unacceptable escalation is the result of the activities of the Houthis and their sponsors, who have perpetrated a coup, occupied legitimate Government and other institutions by force, and kidnapped and placed elected officials — including President Abdrabuh Mansour Hadi Mansour and Prime Minister Khaled Mahfoudh Abdullah Bahah — under house arrest. This is unacceptable. They are using force and flagrantly violating human rights, international law and humanitarian law. They have terrorized the people, committed arbitrary executions, threatened young people, recruited followers and threatened the livelihood, security and health of the people of Yemen. Indeed, the activities undertaken by the Houthis and their sponsors are a gross and egregious violation of resolution 2140 (2014) and of international law.

In response to those events, on 21 January the GCC convened an extraordinary ministerial summit in Saudi Arabia. The meeting reaffirmed the fact that the security of Yemen is intrinsic to the security of all countries of the GCC. It pledged its full support for the Yemeni people and condemned all terrorist activities. The GCC also declared its rejection of the latest move of the Houthis in issuing what they called a constitutional declaration. We believe that the declaration constitutes a violation of the GCC Implementation Mechanism, which is the outcome of the Gulf Initiative, which in turn was the result of the National Dialogue Conference in which all parties took part. The Mechanism is also supported by the Security Council. Therefore, we believe that the recent move should be condemned and that the Council should declare it illegal. We believe that we should bring pressure to bear on the Houthis to stop using force and withdraw from all governmental institutions under their control. They should be asked to normalize the security situation in Sana'a, the capital; put an end to their armed activities; and return the weapons they have looted from security and military institutions.

I believe that if the Security Council does not react quickly enough or if it procrastinates, it will send a reassuring message to the Houthis and their supporters and encourage them to continue in their activities, which will threaten international peace and security and the security and political stability in Yemen. We are confident that the Council will not adopt a passive position towards these activities, because this is a coup using force against an elected Government and Parliament. We believe that the current state of affairs will encourage Al-Qaida to carry out even more activities in the region and will have a negative and nefarious impact on the region and the world at large.

That is why we stand ready to give all possible assistance to our brothers in Yemen to facilitate the achievement of a political solution and implement the GCC Initiative and Implementation Mechanism and the outcomes of the comprehensive National Dialogue Conference. We also hope that general elections will be organized in Yemen in the near future. In order to achieve these goals, the GCC shall support the efforts of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Yemen to promote an amicable agreement and to facilitate and conclude the political transition in Yemen.

Finally, we call on the Security Council to promptly react and address this situation. The GCC shall continue coordinating our efforts with the Security Council in order to ensure the implementation of resolution 2140 (2014) on Yemen to protect peace and stability in Yemen and ensure its territorial integrity and independence. In order to save Yemen from catastrophe, we would like to state once again that Yemen's territorial integrity and stability are part and parcel of our own regional security. We believe that we must make every effort to protect Yemen's vital interests.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7382

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7382nd meeting

Sunday, 15 February 2015, 5 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Chad	Mrs. Alingue
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Jordan	Mrs. Kawar
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	Malaysia	Mr. Haniff
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

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15-04195 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 5.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2015/116, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Angola, Chad, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, New Zealand, Spain, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, Chad, Chile, China, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2201 (2015).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements after the vote.

Mrs. Kawar (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): Jordan welcomes the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 2201 (2015), which we submitted along with the United Kingdom and which reflects our eagerness to restore security and stability in Yemen as soon as possible.

The development of events in Yemen has created a massive political and security vacuum and an accelerated deterioration of the situation therein. We are concerned that the continuation of this situation without the engagement of the international community and the Security Council will have a dire outcome, not only at the local level in Yemen but also in the entire region. Therefore, the unanimous adoption of the resolution by the Council today reflects the unity of the Council in addressing developments in Yemen and conveys a significant message that should be taken seriously by all Yemeni parties.

The Council has condemned the acts of the Houthis, inter alia, the seizure of Government institutions and the dissolution of the legislative authority represented by the Parliament. They are also obliged to immediately engage in good faith in the United Nations-brokered negotiations; to withdraw their forces from Government institutions, including in the capital, Sana'a; to normalize the security situation in the capital and other provinces; to relinquish Government and security institutions; to release to safety President Hadi Mansour, Prime Minister Khaled Bahah, members of his Cabinet and all individuals under house arrest or arbitrarily detained; and to refrain from further unilateral actions that could undetmine the political process in Yemen.

We reiterate today the centrality and significance of a peaceful, inclusive and political transition process that would involve all parties in Yemen, in accordance with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Initiative and Implementation Mechanism, the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference and the Peace and Partnership Agreement, which all constitute a genuine basis for ensuring the security and stability of Yemen with a view to finalizing and adopting the draft constitution, reforming the electoral system and holding the general elections afterwards. In this context, we stress the central and significant role of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, Mr. Jamal Benomar, in promoting a convergence of views, brokering the peaceful transition in Yemen and coordinating the assistance extended by the international community to support the political transition process.

The coming period in Yemen will be crucial and sensitive, as the country is at a crossroads that requires the international community in general, and the Security Council in particular, to carry out the responsibilities assigned to us in order to help the Yemeni people to move forward on the path of peace, security and stability.

In conclusion, I should like to express my appreciation to the States members of the Security Council that have demonstrated their readiness and resolve to prevent Yemen from sliding into the abyss and have heeded Jordan's repeated requests to play their expected role promptly and unequivocally. We also commend them for assuming their responsibility

for the maintenance of international peace and security and for their response to the concerns of the countries of the GCC, as well as for their consideration of the potential political and security repercussions for the entire region if the situation in Yemen were to further deteriorate, thereby giving terrorism and extremism a greater opportunity to further expand, seize more territory, propagate its violence more broadly and threaten the Middle East, in particular the neighbouring countries of the Gulf.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): We welcome the unanimous adoption of resolution 2201 (2015). It was clear at the open briefing earlier this week (see S/PV.7381) that the world was waiting for a powerful message from the Security Council in response to recent developments in Yemen. Today, we have made clear that those who use violence and intimidation to try to dictate Yemen's future are undermining the security of all Yemeni citizens and eroding the political progress made since 2011. The Houthis must take responsibility for their actions and stop using violence and coercion as political tools. They must ensure the immediate and safe release of President Hadi Mansour, Prime Minister Bahah and members of the Cabinet from house arrest.

There can be no doubt that the principles underlying the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Initiative, the National Dialogue and last September's Peace and National Partnership Agreement are the only legitimate road map for Yemen's transition. The Council has sent a clear message today that all parties in Yemen, and especially the Houthis, need to pull back from the brink and implement these commitments on a swift and inclusive basis.

I would like to express my appreciation for the continued work of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, Mr. Jamal Benomar, and call on the Houthis and on all parties to engage in good faith in United Nations-brokered negotiations. The Council has once again spoken in one voice and delivered a strong and unified message. I would like to thank Jordan and all delegations for their support and flexibility in agreeing this important resolution. I am particularly grateful for the close and productive consultations that Jordan and the United Kingdom have enjoyed with the GCC. Their leadership on this issue so close to their borders is critically important.

Ms. Power (United States of America): The United States is pleased to support the adoption of a Security Council resolution that sends a clear message. All parties in Yemen, especially the Houthi, must commit to resolving the country's political crisis by consensus through a peaceful and inclusive dialogue.

Today, the Council deplores unilateral attempts by the Houthi to take over Government institutions and to dissolve Parliament by force, and the Council reaffirms the road map for implementing Yemen's transition provided by the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and Implementation Mechanism and the outcomes of the comprehensive National Dialogue Conference. The people of Yemen deserve a clear path back to the political transition process and a legitimate Government based on these agreements and the resolutions of the Council with a publicly announced timeline and specific dates for the completion of a new constitution, a constitutional referendum and national elections.

We continue to strongly support the efforts of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, Mr. Jamal Benomar, to mediate a consensus solution to this political crisis — a process vital to defusing tensions on the ground. We also underscore the Security Council's demand for the Houthi t release President Hadi Mansour, Prime Minister Bahah and other members of the Cabinet from house arrest immediately. Their continued detention is unacceptable, and they must be granted full freedom of movement. We strongly condemn the use of force against peaceful protesters in Ibb on 14 February.

The United States will continue supporting all Yemenis who are working toward a peaceful, prosperous and unified Yemen.

Mr. Safronkov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation supported the adoption today of resolution 2201 (2015), which encourages all parties in Yemen to pursue dialogue, intensify their efforts to resolve the political crisis, and strive to implement the arrangements reached in the context of the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and Implementation Mechanism and the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference and the Peace and National Partnership Agreement. The resolution urges all parties to agree upon and announce publicly dates for completing the constitutional consultation process, to hold a referendum on the constitution, and to conduct elections.

It is clear that the use of unilateral force will be counterproductive to efforts to advance the political

process and only further exacerbate the crisis. Such actions must be avoided, as categorically demanded in the resolution, which gives them due attention. We support the steps taken by the parties, with the assistence of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General, Mr. Benomar, to find a formula for a long-term and sustainable settlement in Yemen that would meet the interests of all the inhabitants of the country. It is important that the parties honour their commitments under the agreements reached.

The Russian Federation insists that the leading political forces in Yemen pursue constructive dialogue on the internal political agenda and on issues related to drafting a formula for State governance. That is particularly relevant in the light of the growing terrorist threat to the region, the country and the territorial integrity of Yemen.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): France thanks the United Kingdom and Jordan for having prepared resolution 2201 (2015). We are pleased that, with the constructive engagement of Council members, the text could be negotiated quickly and unanimously adopted. We believe, indeed, that the very difficult circumstances currently facing Yemen necessitated the expression by the Council of at least three messages.

The first is that of the full ability of the Council to act in unision in support of the Yemeni transition. Between 2011 and 2014, in a turbulent regional environment, Yemen demonstrated its exemplary ability to conduct a peaceful and orderly incremental transition to democracy, with the support of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Security Council. Since July 2014, this positive momentum has been reversed to an alarming extent. While the transition was entering its final phase — not only the most important but also the most sensitive — Yemen has gradually become mired in political and security instability that threatens to negate the efforts of the Yemeni people and the international community. It was essential, in this very delicate phase, that we remain united alongside the Yemeni people.

The second message is stresses the urgent need for the Yemeni parties to engage in the good-faith negotiations facilitated by the United Nations to resolve their differences through a political solution. We recall, in this respect, our full support for the good offices mission conducted by the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, Mr. Jamal Benomar. Through resolution 2201 (2015), the international community unequivocally rejects the use of force to achieve political goals and unilateral acts that contradict the search for a negotiated solution. Instead, it calls on all parties in Yemen to respect the rules of the democratic game and to define, in the framework of an inclusive process, a consensual political solution that respects previous agreements, including the GCC Initiative and Implementation Mechanism, the conclusions of the National Dialogue Conference, the Peace and National Partnership Agreement and its security annex. As the resolution points out, while previous agreements have not been respected, this solution must be strictly implemented.

Lastly, the resolution sends a firm message in favour of the unity, integrity and stability of Yemen. The political vacuum in the country promotes the manifestation of violent discord that threatens its integrity. This is true not only politically, with the divisions that I have just mentioned, and at the regional level with the disturbing ascendency of secessionist tendencies, but also in terms of security, with the strengthening of the threat posed by Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula. France is particularly concerned about this aspect in the light of the violent attacks sponsored by that terrorist organization in early January.

While the extension of a situation without inclusive political solution crisis reinforces terrorism, France renews its commitment to a resumption of the political transition that would restore the conditions of the anti-terrorist cooperation.

Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Sir, for having convened this meeting of the Security Council, and the delegations of the United Kingdom and Jordan for having introduced resolution 2201 (2015), the adoption of which is very good news for two reasons. The first is that the Security Council's credibility depends to a large extent on its effectiveness in response to such threats; the second, we believe, is that it will help to stop the escalating violence in Yemen.

Spain urges all Yemeni stakeholders to return to the path of dialogue and to relaunch the transition process supported by the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and its Implementation Mechanism. The Gulf Cooperation Council has played an absolutely fundamental role. An inclusive dialogue is the only

possible solution to make progress and achieve the goals of unity and prosperity in Yemen.

I would like to express Spain's gratitude for the work done by the Secretary-General's Special Adviser Jamal Benomar, as well as to assure the members of the Council that the situation of insecurity and the lack of appropriate conditions have led Spain temporarily to suspend its presence in Yemen. We have departed for the time being, but we will return as soon as conditions allow our mission to do so.

However, as well as we might have done it, our work does not end today. For, among the many issues, there are three matters of particular concern to Spain. First, all experts agree that Ansarallah is a group made up mostly of people with little or no training in politics, and we cannot be entirely certain that they can start along the path towards a return to democracy. Secondly, the very interesting report *Small Arms Survey 2014* sets out the current situation in Yemen. This is no less than the third country in the world with the most weapons per inhabitant. And, thirdly, as some delegations have pointed out, in this type of conflict terrorist movements such as Al-Qaida always take advantage of the situation.

I would like to conclude by mentioning a phrase that is usually found in all resolutions but which sometimes goes unnoticed. As found in paragraph 15 of resolution 2201 (2015), that phrase is "decides to remain actively seized of the matter". I believe that the Council should remain seized of the matter of Yemen.

Mrs. Alingue (Chad) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank Jordan and the United Kingdom for initiating the text of resolution 2201 (2015).

Chad welcomes the unanimous adoption by the members of the Security Council of resolution 2201 (2015). This once again attests to Council unity in the face of the serious situation prevailing in Yemen, which is more than ever endangering the political process and threatening the country's unity and cohesion.

We voted in favour of the resolution because it seems to us to be strong, balanced and to the point. It is strong in that it deplores the unilateral actions taken by the Houthis and clearly calls on them to immediately remove their forces from State institutions and to normalize the situation in the capital and in the country's provinces. It is balanced in that it calls on all parties to engage in good faith in the negotiations aimed at finding a solution out of the crisis in line with the relevant provisions of the Gulf Cooperation Council and its Implementation Mechanism, the outcome of the National Dialogue Conference and the Peace and National Partnership Agreement.

Against that backdrop, we call on all Yemeni stakeholders immediately to implement the provisions of resolution 2201 (2015), with a view to finding a political solution to this crisis that can serve to overcome all the threats to the country's security and stability.

We believe that Yemen can be governed only on the basis of consensus. It is crucial that all the parties to the conflict immediately engage in dialogue and avoid turning to force to resolve their political differences. We reiterate our full support for the efforts of Mr. Jamal Benomar, Special Adviser of the Secretary-General, aimed at arriving at a way out of the crisis.

Mr. Haniff (Malaysia): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting, which reflects the urgency of the matter before us. My delegation also commends the Initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council in coming up with a resolution on Yemen, as well as the efforts by Jordan and the United Kingdom to facilitate discussions on resolution 2201 (2015).

This month marks the fourth anniversary of the revolution in Yemen that sparked the democratic transition in the country on the basis of the aspirations of its people. Yemen was a success model for the region, being the only country with a negotiated political transition arising from the Arab Spring in 2011, which included a clear road map and timeline for for an inclusive democratic transition. Unfortunately, Yemen is currently in real danger of backsliding into civil war and sectarian conflict. Malaysia is deeply alarmed at the unravelling situation in the country with the unilateral takeover of the Government by the Houthis, the increasing threat of terrorism, the looming secession in the south and the dire humanitarian crisis.

We hope that the resolution adopted today, of which Malaysia was a sponsor, will send a clear and unmistakable signal to all parties in Yemen that any efforts to derail the political transition in the country, whether directly or indirectly, are unacceptable. We also call on the Houthis to immediately release the Yemeni President, Prime Minister and Cabinet Ministers from house arrest.

We highly appreciate the tireless efforts by Mr. Jamal Benomar, Special Adviser of the Secretary-

General for Yemen, to salvage the dialogue among all parties. We reiterate our strong backing for his work. His optimism and perseverance to resolve the current situation through inclusive dialogue and negotiations in a difficult situation is highly admirable. However, in the end, the success of the negotiations will depend upon the political will of the parties in Yemen themselves. Malaysia therefore urges all parties, in particular the Houthis, to uphold their earlier commitments to the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and its Implementation Mechanism, the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference and the Peace and National Partnership Agreement. We share the view of the international community that this remains the only legitimate path towards a democratic, stable and inclusive Yemen. We will continue to support Yemen in that endeavour.

Mr. McLay (New Zealand): New Zealand welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2201 (2015). We applaud the role played by Jordan and the United Kingdom in the Council, and the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in facilitating that outcome.

For New Zealand the two main purposes of the resolution are, first, that it emphasizes the centrality of the agreed transition framework — the GCC Initiative, the National Dialogue Conference outcomes and the Peace and National Partnership Agreement — to the political transition in Yemen. Secondly, it condemns recent unilateral action by the Houthis, which undermines that agreed framework.

This resolution is overdue. We regret that, despite several opportunities, this has been the first product the Council has been able to adopt since an armed group captured the presidential palace on 20 January. That action was described in the Chamber last week as a coup against the legitimate Government of Yemen. It was also, of course, a coup d'état against the transition process that had been formally endorsed by the Council.

The situation in Yemen is still at very real risk of further deterioration, and will certainly remain so while the President and Prime Minister remain under house arrest. We call for their early release.

We know from Special Adviser Jamal Benomar that the Council's response to the crisis has been very closely watched in Yemen, and that in the past the parties have responded to our messaging. Against that background, given the close attention in Yemen to our response, the final agreement and achievement unity in the Council are even more welcome.

New Zealand is convinced that all parties must now fully engage in the United Nations-brokered talks, and do so in the spirit of compromise directed towards achieving a political settlement that allows for a resumption of the political transition that was previously agreed, which also tackles some of the other serious issues faced by Yemen.

While today we have focused on the immediate crisis, there are many important issues that the resolution can only touch on, in particular the humanitarian consequences of the crisis, the continued threat of terrorist groups and the serious social and economic issues that four years ago led the people of Yemen to an agreed process of political transition, one that appeared to be a model for the rest of the region — a political transition that, until the Houthis' ill-judged intervention, appeared to be on a fragile but positive path.

Those issues are central to Yemen's longer-term stability. They must also be addressed. Therefore, we agree with Spain and others that they deserve our continued attention and that we must remain seized of the matter.

Mr. Ramírez Carreño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela supports, and voted in favour of, resolution 2201 (2015) on the situation in Yemen. We are convinced that a peaceful solution to the political crisis is the only possible avenue open to all the parties to achieve strong and lasting peace in the country.

Venezuela reiterates its rejection of any illegal unilateral action that undermines the political and constitutional status of Yemen. As a matter of principle, our country always rejects coups d'état and political destabilization. Our country reiterates its condemnation of the use of violence and terrorism in all its manifestations, regardless of motivation or who commits it. All political stakeholders must respect the exising road map and the Gulf Cooperation Council initiatives aimed at opening up a path towards a political transition in this brotherly country through dialogue.

We once again emphasize our resolute support for respect for the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Yemen. We hope that this Security Council resolution will serve to encourage the

parties to follow the road map charted to achieve peace and political stability, in line with the National Dialogue Conference outcomes of the National Partnership Agreement. National dialogue must continue, and we must insist on an effort in that regard that involves all political, ethnic and religious groups in the country.

We call once again for the release of President Abdrabuh Mansour Hadi Mansour, as well as the members of the Cabinet who are currently being detained.

Finally, Venezuela reiterates its full support for the good offices of the Secretary-General's Special Adviser, Mr. Jamal Benomar, as he endeavours to act as facilitator in resolving the political crisis with the consent of all the parties and in line with the interests of the Yemeni people.

Mr. Barros Melet (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Chile is grateful for the initiative of the United Kingdom and Jordan in preparing and introducing the timely resolution 2201 (2015). We appreciate the effort made in the Security Council to agree on a text that reflects a firm common position in the face of the urgent issue of Yemen.

Despite the coup d'état, it is now time for the parties in Yemen to assume their responsibilities and relaunch the dialogue. More than ever, we urge all the parties to avoid unilateral actions and to speed up inclusive negotiations, facilitated by the United Nations, with a view to moving ahead with the political transition.

We demand the early and safe release of President Abdrabuh Mansour Hadi Mansour, Prime Minister Khaled Mahfoudh Abdullah Bahah and all political leaders under arbitrary house arrest.

Mr. Lucas (Angola): We thank the delegations of Jordan and the United Kingdom for taking the initiative to draft and present the timely resolution 2201 (2015) on the situation in Yemen, which Angola was very honoured to sponsor. It is our hope that its unanimous adoption will make a tangible contribution to the mediation efforts that Special Adviser Jamal Benomar is deploying for a dialogue towards a peaceful political settlement to the extremely grave situation in Yemen, which was created by the strategy of the Houthi faction to take over all Government institutions, dissolve the Parliament and hold President Mansour and Prime Minister Baha under house arrest. We urge their immediate release. By their actions, the Houthis are seriously harming the prospects for a peaceful transition process, to which whey are signatories. The immediate result of such an approach is to further alienate and radicalize other political actors, thereby setting up a scenario with unforeseen consequences — but certainly including further suffering, pain and sorrow for the Yemeni people.

We are aware that there are difficult times ahead, but we hope that the situation will not degenerate even further and that it is still possible to salvage the political transition based on the Peace and National Partnership Agreement. As events unfold, we are particularly concerned about the growing threat of the country's fragmentation, with southern Yemen moving to secession, the increasing sectarian nature of the conflict and the new opportunities that Al-Qaida is enjoying — a trend whose reversal is absolutely imperative.

By adopting today's resolution, the Security Council is sending a clear and strong message to the Houthi leadership and to all Yemeni stakeholders that it is in everyone's best interest to resume dialogue under the framework provided by the Gulf Coopderation Council Initiative, the National Dialogue Conference outcomes and the Peace and National Partnership Agreement, and, by doing so, safeguard the political transition framework that, by their actions, the Houthis have dangerously undermined. We strongly urge all the parties to abide by resolution 2201 (2015) and to reach the much-neded compromises. Otherwise, mayhem, civil war, totalitarianism and an Al-Qaida-like regime might lie ahead for Yemen.

The countries of the region, the Gulf Cooperation Council and all actors with some leverage on Yemeni actors should assume their responsibilities towards the Yemeni people and give a chance to political compromise and, ultimately, to peace.

Ms. Murmokaitė (Lithuania): Lithuania welcomes the adoption by consensus of resolution 2201 (2015), on Yemen, which we were happy to sponsor. In the past months, the Security Council has not always been at its best, and we have been too slow to act on several occasions. This particular signal that the Council is ready to rise to the challenge and do its part in supporting the transition in Yemen is therefore essential. Through this resolution, the Council is sending a powerful message that all parties, in particular the Houthis, must engage in a constructive and inclusive dialogue that leads to

agreement on a draft constitution and on the holding of a constitutional referendum and elections within a clear time frame.

The core idea behind the involvement of the United Nations and the Council is Yemen was to present its people with a clear break from the past based on democracy, human rights, the rule of law and national reconciliation. That idea, enshrined in the Initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference and the Peace and National Partnership Agreement, should remain the key reference point for any future path. We thank the main sponsors and authors of the resolution — Jordan and the United Kingdom. As our United Kingdom colleague did, I would also like to stress the role of the GCC, which remains essential in Yemen moving forward.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of China.

The Council has just adopted unanimously resolution 2201 (2015), on the question of Yemen, which reiterates support for the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Yemen and explicitly requests the parties concerned to engage in consultations in dialogue for a peaceful settlement of their differences. That is of importance in pushing the parties to achieve reconciliation and restore stability at an early date.

China calls on the concerned parties in Yemen to bear the fundamental interests of their nation and people in mind, comprehensively implement all resolutions, including resolution 2201 (2015), expedite their dialogue and negotiations, and achieve reconciliation as soon as possible. They should continue to implement the outcome document of the National Dialogue Conference, the Peace and National Partnership Agreement, and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Initiative. They should steadfastly advance the political transition so that their country can embark on the path to peace, stability and development at an early date.

China appreciates and supports the good offices and mediation of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and his Special Adviser on Yemen, Mr. Benomar. We welcome the ongoing constructive role being played by the GCC and the relevant international parties concerned. China will continue to play an active role in maintaining the peace and stability of Yemen and advancing the political transition process.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7383

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7383rd meeting
Tuesday, 17 February 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Mangaral
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	France	Mr. Lamek
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Mrs. Jakubonė
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

The situation concerning Iraq

Fifth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013) (S/2015/70)

Second report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 2169 (2014) (S/2015/82)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

15-04201 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Iraq

Fifth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013) (S/2015/70)

Second report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 2169 (2014) (S/2015/82)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Iraq to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Nickolay Mladenov, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/70, which contains the fifth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013). I also wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/82, the second report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 2169 (2014).

Before giving the floor to Mr. Mladenov, I would like to take this opportunity, given that this will be his final briefing to the Council as Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, to thank him for his exceptional service. The Council wishes him every success as he transitions to his new role as Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority, and we look forward to continuing to work with him in that capacity.

I now give the floor to Mr. Mladenov.

Mr. Mladenov: I have the honour to present the second report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/82) pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 2169 (2014), as well as the fifth report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/70) pursuant to paragraph 4 of resolution 2107 (2013) on the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals, and missing Kuwaiti property.

As I complete my tenure as the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Iraq, to borrow a phrase, I remain a paranoid optimist — an optimist because, despite the year-long security crisis, Iraq's political, community and religious leaders have coalesced to save their country from terror. Today more than ever, there is a growing understanding that Iraq can move forward only on the basis of the principles of democracy, the rule of law, respect for diversity and inclusivity. This understanding has been increasingly evident since the formation of a national unity Government set on addressing many long-standing concerns of the Iraqi people. I am, however, also paranoid that things may go wrong. The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) remains in control of most of Iraq's western provinces; the fragile efforts towards unity and reconciliation need to be carefully nurtured if they are to bear fruit; while the economy has been hit by falling oil prices and skyrocketing security costs.

Since its formation in September 2014, the Government has taken important steps in fulfilling its agenda. It has engaged countries of the region, all with a view to regaining the confidence of Iraq's population in the political process and promoting stability. While pursuing these objectives, Iraq's most pressing goal remains to win back territory taken by ISIL. In that respect, the Government hats taken important measures for security sector reform. The authorities have pledged to provide military and financial assistance to local leaders and tribal fighters to aid their struggle against ISIL. Since the beginning of the year, at least 4,000 Iraqis from Anbar and Ninewa have signed up as part of the popular mobilization force — an important first step in securing local forces for the liberation of Iraq's western provinces.

I encourage the Government to empower and quickly provide all necessary means to these local fighters as they seek to free their homes from ISIL, while also supporting recovery and reconstruction. I also encourage the Council of Representatives to adopt the necessary legislation to establish the Iraqi national guard so as to allow the provinces to take greater responsibility for their own security. In January, the Government submitted to Parliament a bill to that effect.

An exclusively military solution to the problem of ISIL is impossible; indeed, it would be counterproductive. I therefore welcome the consistent calls for unity by the President, the Prime Minister and the Speaker of Parliament. Any effort to achieve unity through reconciliation must be based on the Constitution and the principles of inclusivity, with the full participation of political, religious and community leaders from across Iraq. A particular focus must also be placed on increasing the role and participation of women. As such, the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) has strongly supported the Government's national reconciliation and social cohesion agenda.

Recently, we convened in Baghdad a round table on social cohesion with prominent Iraqi political, religious and civil society representatives, who discussed the causes of recommendations that were presented to the Government. Subsequently, the United Nations convened round tables in Karbala and Basra, bringing together local leaders. During these meetings, participants reiterated the importance of strengthening social and religious cohesion, as well as of rectifying divisions within Iraqi society. the United Nations Development Programme is also expanding its community reconciliation initiative at the grass-roots level.

In addition to these developments, relations between the federal Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government have improved following their historic agreement on energy exports and revenue-sharing. Improved cooperation is also evident between the Iraqi security forces, the Peshmerga, volunteers, local communities and the forces of the anti-ISIL international coalition. This cooperation has been key in dealing with the most recent security threats, including to the city of Kirkuk, the Ein Al-Assad air base and elsewhere in the country.

Despite these positive steps, the process is fraught with risks. Armed conflict and acts of terrorism continue to inflict a terrible toll on the people of Iraq. In 2014, at least 12,000 civilians were killed and over 23,000 injured. In January this year alone, there were over 2,200 civilian casualties, including 790 killed and some 1,500 injured. Almost daily terrorist attacks continue to deliberately target all Iraqis — most notably from the Shiite community, as well as from ethnic and religious minorities — across the country. The continued reports of massive human rights violations and abuses being committed by ISIL against civilians are gruesome. ISIL has made a point of not hesitating to openly publicize its crimes committed against men, women and children. The safety and security of members of Iraq's diverse ethnic and religious communities in areas controlled by ISIL — particularly the thousands of women and children who remain in captivity — remain of grave concern. Equally worrying is the increasing number of reports of revenge attacks committed particularly against members of the Sunni community in areas liberated from ISIL control.

All of these ongoing human rights violations present a serious threat to the cohesion of Iraq. Some of Iraq's recent military gains in Diyala, Salah al-Din and Ninewa governorates have been marred by claims that militias have killed unarmed civilians and intentionally destroyed property and places of worship. It is imperative that the Government act swiftly and decisively to bring under control all armed groups that are outside of the Constitution. Failing to do so risks undermining the much-needed process of national unity and reconciliation. Political parties, however, should also show restraint in their statements in the face of such acts, which are clearly aimed at destroying Iraq's social fabric.

It is in that respect that I welcome the Government's decision to conduct a full investigation into the alleged massacres in Diyala province. To paraphrase Prime Minister al-Abadi, a crime is a crime, no matter who has committed it, and all responsible should be held accountable It is also encouraging that, as we speak today, Iraq's President, Prime Minister and Speaker of Parliament are holding a joint meeting to identify measures to address the events of recent days.

The Government faces the additional challenge of a very fiscally constrained environment. In a hallmark of success in January, the Council of Representatives approved the 2015 budget. Despite very tight spending limits due to the fall in oil revenue, spiralling security costs and an massively expanded public sector wage bill, Parliament was able to set aside some $500 million to help rebuild lives and livelihoods in those areas that are liberated from ISIL. The United Nations is working actively with the authorities to set up a recovery and reconstruction fund through which Iraq's allies, neighbours and friends can contribute to this process as well.

Most urgently perhaps, the Iraqi authorities and the United Nations need to redouble our efforts in

supporting over 2 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) who have been forced from their homes since January 2014. Let me recall for the Council the gravity of the situation on the ground by highlighting some numbers. Some 5.2 million people need humanitarian assistance in Iraq today, of whom 2.25 million are displaced and 235,000 are refugees from the conflict in Syria. To date, the population of the Kurdistan region has increased by some 30 per cent because of the influx. Despite the generosity of local communities across the country, one-third of IDPs in accessible areas are living in unfinished and abandoned buildings, makeshift shelters and spontaneous settlements. They are highly vulnerable and dependent on assistance to survive.

Let me sound the alarm bell. Sixty per cent of humanitarian operations in Iraq are likely to shut down or be curtailed unless funding is received in the next few weeks. The food pipeline will break in mid-May unless funding is received before the end of March. The essential medicines pipeline will break at the end of March. The United Nations humanitarian country team, led by newly appointed Humanitarian Coordinator Lise Grande, has put together a list of fast-track priorities that cannot be postponed or ignored. We urgently need approximately $150 million to support IDPs, whose life-saving protection needs are enormous and likely to grow. I take this opportunity to appeal to the international community in that regard, at a time when Iraq is highly vulnerable and when support for the humanitarian operation will make a decisive difference in the direction of the country.

As I conclude my mission in Iraq I would like to send a message to the Government of Iraq to encourage it to move swiftly on the full implementation of the ministerial programme and the political agreement. Those documents hold the key to seeing Iraq successfully move forward. Discussions on approving the necessary legislation for a national guard should be swiftly finalized. That is important in order to empower provinces to take more responsibility for their own security. It will also help ensure that all weapons are firmly under the control of the State. Most important, the Government should act decisively to rebuild the armed forces on a truly national basis.

Part of the political agreement that has been the basis for the formation of the Government is to grant amnesty and to revise the justice and accountability law in order to allow Iraqis who have not committed crimes under the brutal regime of Saddam Al-Hussein to move forward with their lives and find their place in their country.

While tackling the security and political challenges, the social and economic agenda must also remain in focus. Addressing pockets of deep poverty, particularly in the south of the country, providing quality social services, providing a business climate for investors, fighting pervasive corruption and, perhaps most urgent, facilitating the return of displaced persons to their homes and rebuilding areas liberated from ISIL — all such policies are all key to social peace in Iraq. I also take this opportunity to assure the people and the Government of Iraq that the United Nations will continue to provide international assistance and expertise in that process.

Let me turn briefly to the fifth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of resolution 2107 (2013), on the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and on property.

Iraq-Kuwait relations continue to be on the ascendant. High-level Iraqi visits and the results of the fourth Joint Ministerial Committee meeting are very encouraging. Kuwait's consulates in Basra and Erbil, when opened, will take Iraq-Kuwait relations to the next level.

I wish that I could report similar progress to the Council on the missing Kuwaitis and the Kuwaiti national archives since the previous report (S/2014/776). The Kuwaiti Government and people are understandably disappointed that nothing tangible has been achieved for many years now. UNAMI shares their disappointment. We have placed much emphasis on witnesses and continue to emphasise that the most modern scientific advances and technology should be utilized. A UNAMI-identified witness travelled recently to Kuwait during the reporting period. That visit, for which UNAMI and the Iraqi Government had worked hard, regrettably did not yield anything substantial. Time remains our most formidable foe. Our team is working to reach another witness, who has been overseas and who Kuwait believes holds the key to identifying a gravesite that may contain as many as 180 mortal remains.

Let me assure the Council and the families of the Kuwaiti missing persons that the United Nations will continue to do its utmost to fulfil its mandate. Nonetheless, the key to achieving tangible progress is primarily in the hands of the parties themselves. The

goodwill between Kuwait and Iraq is at its highest since 1990. I believe that this is a very opportune moment for their respective leaderships to come together on this important humanitarian issue, review efforts so far and decide on a new course of action. Resources, technology and a fresh approach may all be required. As always, UNAMI stands ready to support that process.

As I conclude my tenure as the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Iraq, let me say, on a more personal level, how humbled I have been by the people of the country. For decades they have lived with dictatorship, conflict and terrorism, yet they persist in their determination to build a democratic State. Generations have been scarred and brought up in fear — fear of oppression, fear for their future, fear for their lives. Iraqi society has been deeply scarred and will take a long time to heal. But the medicine is to look forward to unity and reconciliation, not to turn to the failed policies of the past.

ISIL flourishes when Iraq is weak, and Iraq is weak when it is divided by sectarian politics and when political patronage overtakes national loyalty. My unyielding optimism for the country, however, stems from the spirit of the ordinary Iraqi people, those who stood up to defend their country in the summer of last year, those who went out to vote despite car bombs and terrorist attacks, those Iraqis who do not care whether someone is Shia, Sunni, Christian, Yazidi, Kurd, Arab or from any other community. It is the overwhelming majority of ordinary Iraqis who have no foreign country to flee to, no foreign passport to rely on. Those are the men and women who will build a new Iraq. What we in the international community can and must do is to help them succeed. We must support them in building democracy, without which the majority of Iraqis will not feel secure, nor will their human rights be protected. We must work with them to achieve a balance among their diverse communities inside the country, because without balance violence and extremism will persist. We must assist them in ensuring justice, not reprisal, for the crimes of the past and violations of today. Finally, we must grant the people of Iraq the respect and dignity that they deserve. That is the noble mission of the United Nations in Iraq.

Allow me to thank Council members' Governments and the Secretary-General for the unity that they have shown in supporting Iraq, for the unyielding support for UNAMI and for the trust they have placed in me to lead this difficult Mission. I also want to express my deep gratitude to my colleagues in the Mission, in the Secretariat and in the United Nations country team for their commitment, bravery and hard work throughout the years. And I would like to thank the Government and the people of Iraq for the hospitality that they have extended to me, for their friendship and for their daily courage to never give up in the face of terror. It has been an honour serving as the Secretary-General's Representative for Iraq.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Mladenov for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Iraq.

Mr. Alhakim (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to express my congratulations to the People's Republic of China on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I also pay tribute to the Permanent Mission of Chile for its skilful presidency of the Council last month. And I thank Mr. Nickolay Mladenov for his important and comprehensive briefing.

The Government and the people of Iraq express their appreciation to the Russian Federation, China, the United Kingdom, the United States and all the other members of the Council for adopting resolution 2199 (2015) under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, with the aim of drying up the financial resources of terrorist gangs.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/82) positively and objectively places the spotlight on developments in Iraq and on the achievements of the Government of Prime Minister Haider Al Abadi since the vote of confidence last August, which illustrates the commitment of the Government of Iraq to make progress on the programmes agreed for the first six months, in spite of the security, humanitarian and economic challenges facing Iraq, so as to ensure equality and the rule of law, fight corruption and improve relations with all States of the region and the world — with combating the terrorist group Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) at the top of its priorities.

In the context of promoting internal political stability, the Council of Representatives approved the 2015 federal budget bill. This is a fundamental step in revitalizing Iraq's economy. It is also a manifestation of political agreements that reflect the Iraqi polity's acknowledgment of the responsibility it bears at the current critical stage in Iraq.

The Government of Iraq continues to promote national reconciliation on a number of fronts. The Government has held intensive contacts with political leaders, clans and religious authorities of all sects with a view to reconciliation, renewing national bonds and sending out a message of unity to the effect that the national interest is paramount. Everyone believes that cooperation among the Iraqi armed forces, the Peshmerga, the Popular Movement and the clans in the combat against ISIL is important and essential.

The Government has completed the drafting of a law creating the national guard and has submitted it to Parliament. It represents an opportunity for the members of the clans and the national movements to defend their cities in all governorates. Furthermore, during the same period, an important political agreement was reached between the central Government and the Government of the Kurdistan region pertaining to the distribution of natural resources in Iraq to all the Iraqi people in a just manner, which is a fundamental step in the right direction. It is a commitment made with Kurdistan as a fundamental partner in the homeland, which will pave the way to a long-term agreement.

In the context of promoting the rule of law and combatting corruption, the Government has taken administrative, legislative and judicial reform measures aimed at uniting ranks and spreading a spirit of equality and justice to all citizens. The Government is now reviewing all Governmental sectors in order to pinpoint corruption and undertake necessary reforms, including the prosecution of some military leaders, in order to create an atmosphere that would bring in foreign investment to develop commercial opportunities in the country and help in reconstruction. Furthermore, the law on accountability and justice was reviewed and referred to Parliament in order to reintegrate many Government officials who had not committed any crimes against the Iraqi people. This is, again, an attempt at creating a united front.

A law has been signed that commits the security forces and the justice ministry to protecting the human rights of detainees in Iraqi prisons, including a central register of all detainees, together with the reason for their detention and a time frame for prosecution. Paragraph 51 of the report of the Secretary-General refers to reports of some incidents related to breaches by some armed units, and the Prime Minister has adopted an executive order to set up an investigative committee on these events.

We stress once again the importance of the commitment of all Member States to the implementation of resolutions 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014) and 2199 (2014) on combatting terrorism and drying up its sources of financing. There is no alternative to international cooperation to combat terrorism, and many occasions have proven that no State is safe from the threat of terrorism. We look forward to seeing the role being played more effectively, particularly by neighbouring countries, in terms of cooperation, intelligence sharing and border control, because these terrorist groups have desecrated all human values. They have committed the most heinous criminal terrorist acts against the Iraqi people, whether Shiite, Sunni, Christian, Turkmen, Shabak or Yazidi.

Those acts are in fact crimes of genocide committed against humankind whose perpetrators must be held accountable before international justice, without even mentioning the trafficking in human organs and the theft of and trafficking in archeological items and oil. The Iraqi armed forces and the Kurdish Peshmerga forces, in cooperation with the popular forces, in coordination with the clans and with an international support, will undertake combatting terrorism. However, we require still more assistance if we are to overcome ISIL.

The protection of civilians is a fundamental responsibility of the Iraqi Government. Terrorism has displaced 2 million people from their homes, in addition to the Syrian refugees being hosted by Iraq, who number about 250,000. Therefore, the Government, in cooperation with the United Nations and other organizations working in the field, is providing for humanitarian needs to lessen the suffering of those internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees and facilitate their return to their homes after their liberation from the terrorism of ISIL. The Government has set aside $1 billion for 2014 and $1 billion in the federal budget for 2015 to help IDPs. Iraq continues to require the support of the international community to take on the humanitarian crisis raised by the ISIL terrorist entity and to help Iraq confront humanitarian needs, particularly in the winter with very low temperatures and very harsh living conditions.

This year 2015 will be critical to the Iraqi Government's effort to liberate all the areas under ISIL's control, with the assistance of the international coalition which is fighting side by side with us against ISIL. Iraq continues to require assistance to reconstruct liberated areas that have been gravely degraded by

terrorists and to assist IDPs in returning and creating livelihoods. Therefore, Iraq has frequently raised the possibility of creating a fund to reconstruct areas in northern and western Iraq.

With respect to relations with countries of the region, Iraq is continuing to promote relations with all its neighbours in order to coordinate efforts to combat terrorism more effectively. The Prime Minister lately visited the State of Kuwait, Iran, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates, and the President has visited both Saudi Arabia and Qatar. These visits led to agreements to strengthen security cooperation and intelligence sharing in order to defeat the ISIL terrorist entity and review plans to promote cooperation in the areas of economy, oil, investments, trade and the defence of our common borders. Furthermore, the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister were present at the conferences on counter-terrorism held in Brussels, London and Berlin.

Iraq looks forward to developing relations with the State of Kuwait. We value Kuwait's positions in support of Iraq. We thank the State of Kuwait for understanding the very difficult economic conditions prevailing in Iraq because of the war against the terrorist entity ISIL. We value its cooperation to restitute 5 per cent of Iraqi oil export revenues for 2015. Iraq is keen to continue making strong efforts to find and identify the remains of disappeared Kuwaiti persons and the national Kuwaiti archives.

My Government is making every effort to go forward on the democratic path to protect the achievements of democracy under the Constitution, whether through reforming the Government, national reconciliation, combatting ISIL and freeing areas under its control and strengthening relations with neighbouring countries. We value the role of the international coalition led by the United States and permanent Member States of the Security Council, as well as Arab States. We also value the efforts of the United Nations and UNAMI to provide advice and support to the Iraqi Government. We pay tribute to them for their courage in continuing to provide humanitarian assistance even under the difficult conditions prevailing in my country. We cannot fail to renew our thanks and appreciation to Mr. Mladenov for his commitment and his strong efforts to assist Iraq during his mandate as the head of UNAMI. Allow me to express our best wishes for him in his future fuctions.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There are no more speakers inscribed on my list.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on this subject.

The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7384

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7384th meeting
Tuesday, 17 February 2015, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Mangaral
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	Malaysia	Mr. Haniff
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

Letter dated 13 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/264)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

15-04331 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Letter dated 13 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/264)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Germany and Ukraine to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2015/117, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the Russian Federation.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, Chad, Chile, China, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2202 (2015).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the adoption of the resolution.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to the members of the Council for the unanimous adoption of the Russian Federation's draft resolution in support of the arrangements to settle the Ukrainian crisis reached in Minsk on 12 February.

The events that have taken place during the yearlong conflict in the territory of that country have been truly tragic. Thousands of people have died and many towns and villages in eastern Ukraine have been nearly destroyed. More than a million civilians have left the conflict zone, the vast majority of whom have sought shelter on Russian territory.

We believe that now, following the unprecedented diplomatic efforts undertaken in Minsk on 12 February by the highest authorities of Russia, France, Germany and Ukraine, there is a genuine opportunity for Ukraine to turn this tragic page in its history. We support the high assessment of the adoption on 12 February of the package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements and the declaration of the four leaders. We are fully prepared to facilitate the implementation of those agreements.

All sides must fully comply with the Minsk agreements. We must avoid the adoption of unilateral measures that would clearly contravene the letter and the spirit of the documents adopted in Minsk on 12 February.

Since the very start of the crisis, Russia has actively called for its peaceful settlement through inclusive and transparent dialogue between the sides in the internal Ukrainian conflict and has done its utmost to ensure that an open dialogue is established on fundamental political and constitutional issues. We will adhere to this principled approach in future also.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom voted in favour of resolution 2202 (2015) because of the importance of providing full Security Council backing for the agreements reached in Minsk on 5 and 19 September 2014 and of 12 February this year. These agreements must now be implemented comprehensively and according to the agreed timelines in order to secure a sustainable and peaceful resolution of the crisis in eastern Ukraine.

Over 5,400 people have lost their lives in this conflict and over 1.5 million have been displaced. The parties must commit to and invest in this opportunity for peace. We welcome the intensive diplomatic efforts that have brought us to this point, but agreements have been reached before. This time, we must see commitments translated into action and full delivery of the obligations that have been undertaken.

The ceasefire has now been in place for two and a half days. Reporting from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) suggests that it has been respected in the majority of the Donbas. However, intense fighting continues around Debaltseve, where heavy shelling and street-by-street fighting have

resulted in scores of casualties. This flagrant disregard of the ceasefire is deeply concerning and risks undermining the Minsk package in its entirety. The fighting for Debaltseve must stop, and any detained soldier must be treated humanely.

It is totally unacceptable that separatist leaders have made statements claiming that the ceasefire did not apply to Debaltseve, where they were clearly intent on making further territorial gains, and it is deeply concerning that the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission has not been given access to the town. The press statement that the Council has just agreed (SC/11784) makes clear our collective, grave concern over Debaltseve and our unified call for OSCE access.

The actions in and around Debaltseve are not the actions of a party interested in peace. We recall how a Russian-backed separatist offensive brought to an end the ceasefire agreed in September — a cynical effort to undermine the September Minsk agreements and create new realities on the ground. We therefore call on Russia to use its influence on the separatists to cease their onslaught against that town and abide by their commitments. It is vital that the ceasefire be respected in full and upheld across all of eastern Ukraine.

But the ceasefire is only the first step in a series of obligations set out in the Minsk package. We also expect to see the withdrawal of heavy weapons by both sides over the next two weeks in order to create an effective security zone. As the Minsk package makes clear, this process should be facilitated, monitored and verified by the OSCE. It is welcome that the Ukrainian armed forces have already set out their withdrawal plan to the Monitoring Mission. We call on the separatists to show the same commitment to that crucial element of the Minsk package. In parallel, we look forward to progress being made towards local elections, special status legislation, the release of all hostages, and the urgent distribution of humanitarian assistance on the basis of an international mechanism.

The resolution we have adopted today reaffirms resolution 2166 (2014) on the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH-17, in which the Council demanded that those responsible be held to account and that all States cooperate with the efforts to establish accountability. Let me be clear that the amnesty provided for in the Minsk package does not apply to those who may be found responsible for that dreadful crime.

The Council must scrutinize closely the implementation of the Minsk package and use its influence to prevent any repetition of what we saw last autumn. We call on Russia to deliver on the promises it has made. Russia has committed to the implementation of the Minsk agreements at the highest level. That commitment needs to be reflected in actions on the ground. We also call on Russia to use its undoubted influence over the separatists to ensure that they meet their commitments in full. Until we see such actions, international pressure must remain on Russia and its separatist proxies. The Council must play its full role in ensuring that there is complete compliance so that stability can be restored and to guarantee the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine. That must include regular and close monitoring of the ceasefire and a willingness to take further steps in the event that it is not implemented.

Finally, it will be recalled that this crisis began with Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea. As we approach the first anniversary, we must not let events in eastern Ukraine distract us from Russia's blatant disregard for the Charter of the United Nations through its illegal annexation of Crimea.

Ms. Power (United States of America): We have gotten used to living in an upside-down world with respect to Ukraine. Russia speaks of peace and then fuels conflict. Russia signs agreements and then does everything within its power to undermine them. Russia champions the sovereignty of nations and then acts as if its neighbours' borders do not exist.

Yet even for those of us growing accustomed to living in an upside-down world, the idea that Russia — which manufactured and continues to escalate the violence in Ukraine — has submitted a resolution today calling for the conflict's peaceful solution is ironic, to say the least. It is bitterly ironic, given that the Council has dedicated some 30 meetings to calling on Russia to stop escalating the very same conflict, and given the human consequences that are growing daily.

Even as Russia put forward resolution 2202 (2015), separatists that Russia has trained and armed and whom it fights alongside are laying ruthless and deadly siege to the Ukrainian-held city of Debaltseve, approximately 30 to 40 kilometres beyond lines established by the September Minsk agreements. Throughout the day, we have heard conflicting reports as to whether Debaltseve has fallen. According to press reports, the so-called

road of life leading out of Debaltseve has become a road of death, littered with the bodies of Ukrainian soldiers. At the same time that the Council is calling for the ceasefire that was supposed to take effect at midnight on Saturday, Russia is backing an all-out assault.

We do not know how many civilians are left in Debaltseve because Russia and the separatists it supports have refused to guarantee the safety of impartial monitors from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, who have been trying for days to enter the area — a commitment that, in this upside-down world, Russia and the separatists made on 12 February at Minsk. But we know from credible press reports that thousands of civilians in Debaltseve and neighbouring villages have been sheltering from heavy shelling in dank basements, often without running water, food, electricity or basic medical supplies. We know that many of the civilians left, who are enduring the terror of this relentless assault, are the elderly and small children — people who could not evacuate on their own.

Even with such limited information, we know with certainty that at the same time that Russia signs on to yet another agreement committing itself to de-escalation and peace, forces that Russia trains, equips and joins on the battlefield have only escalated this fighting, grabbing more territory and killing the Ukrainian soldiers who stand in their way. We are caught in a deadly feedback loop. International leaders engage in rigorous, exhaustive negotiations to get Russia to commit to peace — in Geneva, in Normandy, in Minsk in September, in Berlin in February, again in Minsk on 12 February when the implementations were signed, and now in New York — yet Russia's commitments have no bearing on the actions of its soldiers and the separatists they back on the ground.

The United States has maintained the same position across 30 meetings of the Security Council with respect to Ukraine. Let me reiterate that position. We are for peace in Ukraine. We are for Ukraine's sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and unity. We are for ending the violence in eastern Ukraine that has taken more than 5,600 lives since last April and already displaced approximately 1 million people. We are for all of the signatories to the agreements signed in Minsk in September 2014, particularly Russia and the separatists they back, fulfilling the commitments that they have made, and we are for the package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements of 5 and 19 September, and the package of measures endorsed last week by the leaders of Ukraine, Russia, Germany and France.

To be clear, the 12 February implementation package is a road map to fulfilling the commitments made by the same signatories in the September Minsk agreements. President Hollande, President Poroshenko, Chancellor Merkel and President Putin each made that clear when they endorsed the implementation package on 12 February and issued their joint declaration, in which they "remained committed to the implementation of the Minsk agreements". The Minsk agreements in the title — plural — refer to those signed on 5 and 19 September by the same signatories, while the measures for implementation in the title made clear that the 12 February package was designed to begin carrying out the September agreements and not to supplant them, as Russia has now begun to argue.

The United States rejects any interpretation of resolution 2202 (2015) that would abrogate the parties' earlier commitments. All parties must implement all of the commitments made in the September Minsk agreements. The implementation steps agreed upon in the 12 February package include a comprehensive ceasefire, the withdrawal of heavy weapons from the September line of contact, the release of all hostages and the eventual restoration of Ukraine's territorial sovereignty and control of its international border.

Too often debates in the Council occur in a vacuum, removed from the real world. In the real world a man named Aleksey Kravchenko, a 73-year-old in the Ukrainian-held town of Svitlodarsk, near Debaltseve, recently told a reporter that he had spent nights huddled together with his grandchildren in a bomb shelter on his property as shelling continued throughout the night. Aleksey told the reporter that his grandchildren said to him in the shelter "Grandpa, I don't want to die young." He said, "I held my grandchildren and they were shaking, and I looked in their eyes and they were afraid". "With the 12 February agreement, now we are hoping", he also said. The fighting, unfortunately, has in fact increased dramatically near Aleksey's home. But we call on Russia to translate hope into real action, to translate hope into real results — and to do so urgently.

Today's Council meeting is an effort to throw the Council's weight behind an agreement already jeopardized by statements by the separatists dismissing the full ceasefire, by their continued attacks on

Debaltseve and by their refusal, together with Russia's, to allow access to the Special Monitoring Mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. We look to Russia, which manufactured and fuelled this conflict, to leave the upside-down world it has created and to honour the resolution it introduced today in support of efforts to end it.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): The urgency of the situation in Ukraine calls for action. The conflict has resulted in more than 5,000 deaths in 10 months, including the victims of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH-17, for which those responsible must answer for their acts, as called for in resolution 2166 (2014). Given a security and humanitarian situation that remains of great concern, our collective responsibility as members of the Security Council is to do everything possible to silence the guns and arrive at an agreement. That is the aim of the courageous and determined approach that the President of France and the German Chancellor have taken in the past two weeks.

We have always believed that the path to peace includes diplomacy. We have always said that the solution to the Ukrainian conflict can only be a political one. With today's resolution 2202 (2015), the Council is putting all its weight and all its authority to silence the guns and chart a course towards peace. As its title indicates, the text concluded in Minsk on 12 February consists of a set of sequential steps intended to implement the Minsk protocol and memorandum, which were agreed, respectively, on 5 and 19 September 2014. They provide in particular for what was and continues to be the absolute priority: the establishment of a ceasefire — which entered into force at midnight on Saturday-Sunday. Full and sustained respect for the ceasefire is the cornerstone for an exit from the crisis.

The speech made by President Poroshenko on Saturday night, in which he gave orders to the whole of the Ukrainian forces to cease fire, confirms Ukraine's commitment to seeking peace. While the ceasefire is universally respected, fighting unfortunately continues, especially in Debaltseve. The fighting must stop immediately, as the Council just demanded in its statement to the press adopted an hour ago (SC/11784).

The Minsk package also calls for the retreat of the warring parties and of heavy weapons, which will make it possible to establish an expanded buffer zone — from 50 to 70 kilometres, in fact larger than the area called for by the Minsk agreements of September 2014. All heavy weapons must be withdrawn within two weeks. This element is an important step towards peace, and it must take concrete form in reality. It is up to the signatory parties to the agreements, including Russia, to give substance to the commitments they have undertaken by their actions. I repeat it here on behalf of France: only actions will count.

By the resolution we have adopted today, the Security Council has endorsed its commitments as did the Heads of State under the Normandy format. Those commitments have thus become obligations undertaken by the signatories to the Minsk agreements before the international community. These are commitments whose scrupulous observance the Council will follow with the utmost diligence. Along with its Council partners, therefore, France calls upon all the parties to lastingly and fully assume their responsibilities to move forward along this demanding path towards peace.

Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): We find ourselves at a crucial moment in the evolution of the conflict in Ukraine. Spain voted in favour of resolution 2202 (2015) not just because we fully agree with its contents, but because we believe that the Security Council, which has very closely followed the conflict, could not remain on the sidelines, especially now.

Since the Minsk protocol of 5 September, there have been thousands of victims — 5,000, in fact, many of them innocent civilians — owing to breakdowns in the ceasefire. The human tragedy in Ukraine is unsustainable, and it is essential to put an end to it. Spain therefore appreciates and welcomes the step taken by France and Germany, an initiative we firmly support.

Last Thursday in Minsk, all the parties agreed to give dialogue a new chance, aware of the fact that the military option was not a solution to the crisis in Ukraine. They therefore committed themselves in this new agreement to put in place a ceasefire, along with the other aspects of the peace process agreed in Minsk last September — which have gone systematically unfulfilled and violated.

As set out in the press statement made public a few minutes ago (SC/11784), we also note with concern that, having entered into force on 15 February, as agreed in Minsk, the ceasefire is not being respected overall. We are concerned in particular about the ongoing fighting in Debaltseve. The parties must fully implement

the agreement reached last week, beginning with an immediate ceasefire in line with the terms agreed. Of course, the success of this new agreement will continue in large measure to depend upon the willingness of the parties. If we want peace, it must be implemented in good faith and completely.

There is no need to recall the gravity of the conflict to peace and stability in Europe. In that regard, I would like to conclude by reiterating that the host of measures agreed in Minsk on 12 February give a very important role both to the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. As a member of both organizations, Spain agrees that both bodies have much to contribute to this process. Of course, we will work responsibly and with determination to ensure that happens.

Mr. Barros Melet (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Chile joined the international community's recognition of the contact group's diplomatic efforts, which have led to the agreement on a ceasefire in eastern Ukraine. We are confident that it will contribute to ending the violence and the humanitarian crisis in the country by providing assistance through an international mechanism.

Resolution 2202 (2015), which we have just adopted, is clear sign of consensus in support of those diplomatic efforts and of the ceasefire for the benefit of the protection of civilians. We view very positively the inclusion of the reference to resolution 2166 (2014) in the adopted text. We are confident that the measures set forth in the 13 points of the agreement reached at the Minsk summit on 12 February will be implemented by all parties for the benefit of the population that has been affected by the crisis.

We emphasize the need to respect the independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine. We call on all parties to fully comply with the provisions of the ceasefire in order to guarantee that a sustainable political solution is agreed that ensures peaceful coexistence based on the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, thereby building lasting peace.

Mr. Haniff (Malaysia): I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the delegations of Australia, Belgium, Canada, Indonesia, the Netherlands, New Zealand and the Philippines, as well as on behalf of my own delegation, Malaysia.

We join other Security Council members in welcoming the adoption of resolution 2202 (2015), on the situation in Ukraine. We believe that the adoption of the resolution will convey the Council's — and by extension the international community's — strong support for the steps taken by the parties concerned to implement the ceasefire arrangements agreed on 12 February. We reiterate our full support for all peaceful efforts aimed at resolving the conflict in Ukraine.

The recent developments in eastern Ukraine prove that a diplomatic and political solution is more urgent than ever. In that regard, we particularly commend the diplomatic initiatives that yielded the package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements last week.

The conflict in eastern Ukraine has gone on for far too long and has claimed the lives of far too many innocent civilians, including the 298 souls aboard Malaysia Airlines Flight MH-17, which was tragically shot down over the conflict area on 17 July 2014. In the aftermath of the tragedy, the Council responded by adopting resolution 2166 (2014), which, inter alia, emphasizes the need for a full, thorough and independent international investigation into the incident and demands that those responsible for the incident be held to account and that all States cooperate fully with efforts to establish accountability. It also clearly outlines the obligations incumbent upon all States Members of the United Nations to cooperate in that regard to bring those responsible to justice.

The resolution adopted today is unambiguous in reaffirming the Council's demand in resolution 2166 (2014) for accountability for those responsible for the downing of Flight MH-17. We reiterate that this demand remains the international standard with respect to accountability and applies to all States Members of the United Nations, particularly set against the Minsk agreements and the package of measures. In that regard, our delegations welcome the reaffirmation of resolution 2166 (2014) in the present resolution.

In conclusion, we call upon the conflicting parties to fully adhere to and implement the Minsk agreements in line with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations as well as the sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and unity of Ukraine. We wish to see an immediate and full implementation of the ceasefire agreement, which could ultimately pave the

way for a sustained political solution and restore peace and stability to the affected areas.

Mr. McLay (New Zealand): New Zealand associates itself with the statement just made by the representative of Malaysia, and we compliment his country on that particular initiative.

It is no secret that over the past four days the Security Council has struggled to negotiate a mutually acceptable text for resolution 2202 (2015). Given the history of the matter, given the bitterness of the conflict and given the active support of troops and materiel that continues to be provided to the separatists, that struggle was hardly surprising. However, those problems should not obscure the very simple truth: that above all our combined objective must be to see an end to the fighting in eastern Ukraine and a genuine and holding ceasefire with lives saved as a result, to see respect for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and to see an end to external support for the separatists. That is the standard by which we have judged this resolution and voted accordingly.

New Zealand really does appreciate the fact that Europeans have at last been able to come together and act together to address this crisis, and, as a result of this resolution, can now be seen to do so with the unequivocal support of the Council. That is what we understand in what negotiating parties sought to achieve in Minsk last week, and indeed in that same city in September 2014. We have therefore supported the outcome they agreed.

We might not like the compromises. We might identify shortcomings. We know that ceasefires do not always hold and, certainly, as events right now in Debaltseve clearly demonstrate, they do not always hold with consistency at all times and in all places. But it has been agreed by those most directly affected. We have now sent a signal of the Council's support for a ceasefire, which is another step towards the long-needed political settlement. We have done so unanimously as the Security Council.

Along with fellow Council member Malaysia, New Zealand has a direct interest in respect of the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH-17 — a victim of the Ukrainian conflict — an interest we share with non-Council members Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Indonesia, the Netherlands and the Philippines, with whom both countries have actively consulted over the past few days. The Council's previous decisions on Flight MH-17 are absolutely clear, so we welcome the reaffirmation of resolution 2166 (2014), which is the primary statement of the Council regarding the accountability of those who illegally launched a surface-to-air missile at a civilian passenger aircraft, murdering 298 people on board.

We thank the primary sponsors of the resolution for taking up and incorporating the language proposed by Malaysia and New Zealand during the negotiations, thus ensuring that the victims are not forgotten and that those responsible may be ultimately held to account. New Zealand agrees with the United Kingdom that the amnesty agreed in Minsk does not and cannot apply to those responsible for that crime.

The adoption of resolution 2202 (2015) does not take place in a vacuum, which is a point that is implicit in the press statement issued by the Council only an hour or so ago (SC/11784). The Council is keenly aware of the fragility of the present ceasefire, of instances where it is only partly observed and of places like Debaltseve where right now it is being outright ignored so that one side can secure a territorial advantage on the ground, after which they might presumably then make as though they are observing what has previously been agreed. That can only be deplored, but it does not alter the fact that the parties have solemnly agreed and committed to a ceasefire and that it is holding in most places, and that is saving lives.

All of us must therefore continue to urge compliance with the agreement and with resolution 2202 (2015), particularly Russia, as a party to the Minsk agreements, which agreed the ceasefire. It is in that capacity that we call upon Russia to use its undoubted and considerable influence on the separatists to require them to honour that which has been agreed. If that happens, more lives will be saved as a result.

Mr. Laro (Nigeria): Nigeria would like to thank the Russian delegation for the effort it has put into drafting resolution 2202 (2015), which the Council has just adopted. We were pleased to see it receive the support of all Council members. Nigeria believes it is important for the Council to send a timely and unequivocal message in support of the efforts of the leaders of Ukraine, Russia, France and Germany to find a lasting political solution to the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

We urge all the parties to implement a comprehensive ceasefire in line with the Minsk agreements. That is a necessary first step in the search for peace. We stress that there can be no military solution to the conflict

in eastern Ukraine. The parties should pursue a political solution through dialogue. It is important that the separatists' concerns be addressed within the framework of a political settlement that does not compromise the independence, unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Ms. Murmokaitė (Lithuania): It is with a heavy heart that we voted for today's resolution 2202 (2015), and with a clear understanding of the terrible toll that this uninvited war has imposed on Ukraine. More than 20,000 people have been internally displaced owing to the illegal annexation of Crimea; at least 5,665 people have been killed, some 2,000 of them since the announcement of the ceasefire in September; nearly 14,000 have been wounded and some 1.5 million have been forced to flee their homes. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has warned that further escalation will prove catastrophic for the 5.2 million people living in the midst of the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

Since the announcement of the Minsk ceasefire in September 2014, the militants have grabbed at least 550 square kilometres of Ukraine's territory, and they keep on grabbing more. Their advances have been buttressed by an ongoing influx of Russian arms and sophisticated weaponry, including that brought in under the pretext of humanitarian convoys. In the past few weeks leading to the latest ceasefire, the militant attacks have expanded in the direction of the cities of Mariupol, Kramatorsk, Artemivsk, Shchastya and others. Even as the package of measures for implementing the Minsk agreements was being drafted, reports were coming in of Russian tanks rolling on Ukrainian soil and of more casualties, including among children.

The Ukrainian city of Debaltseve is under siege even as we speak. Ukraine is holding on, trying to defend a piece of its own land, away from the ceasefire lines established in the Minsk agreements. Heavily armed criminals are continuing their onslaught against Debaltseve and are threatening to continue their deadly march up to Kharkiv and further. Yes, the Council must speak out in support of the ceasefire. But we know full well that previous ceasefires, whether declared unilaterally by the Ukrainian Government or established by the Minsk agreements in September, have been repeatedly violated. Even the most recent agreement is already being violated as we speak by Russian-sponsored militants.

Russian tanks, armoured personnel carriers, howitzers and Grad and Tornado multiple-launch rocket systems in the hands of the militants are holding the eastern part of Ukraine captive. Only the most naïve could imagine that the militants could have waged an ever-expanding war without external help. Without Russia's direct support the so-called separatists would have fizzled out, dwindled into non-existence many months ago. Peace would have been restored and thousands of lives would have been saved. Instead, Russia has chosen to sponsor, arm and protect the militants. It is a direct party to the hostilities and bears the primary responsibility for the conflict that is tearing into Ukraine's flesh.

The package that today's resolution endorses is undoubtedly flawed, but it is the only thing we have. For it to work, all the parties involved, including Russia, must honour their commitments, including the Minsk agreements of September 2014, in full and in their entirety. Those agreements cannot be swept under the carpet. The package of measures agreed on as of 12 February is not and cannot be interpreted as a replacement of, or substitute for, the September 2014 accords, only as a set of measures aimed at their implementation.

We know well what needs to be done. Russian troops and armaments must be withdrawn from Ukraine's territory. A viable mechanism monitored by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) must be established to monitor the ceasefire, and militants must stop blocking the OSCE's access. Russia must stop supporting illegal militias operating in the eastern part of Ukraine. Ukraine must be able to re-establish control of its international border without any preconditions. Humanitarian access must be secured and respect for international human-rights and humanitarian law must be restored. All hostages and unlawfully detained persons — including Ukrainian pilot Nadiya Savchenko, a former peacekeeper and the only Ukrainian female soldier who has served with peacekeeping troops in Iraq, now being illegally held in the Russian Federation — must be released, as per the package of measures agreed on 12 February in Minsk.

Peace cannot be achieved without accountability. We have witnessed multiple times elsewhere how impunity breeds more impunity, eventually provoking new cycles of violence. The reports of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights have repeatedly pointed to the extent of the

serious crimes and abysmal state of lawlessness in the militant-held areas. Only this past weekend, photos were circulating of the self-proclaimed militant chief Zakharchenko with beaten prisoners of war, another reminder of the militants' many violations of international humanitarian law. We want to put on record our firm conviction that justice and accountability must be part and parcel of the path out of this devastating, unprovoked war against Ukraine. The perpetrators of the most serious crimes — and to find them we have only to look at the reports of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, which describe many of them — including those responsible for the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH-17, must be held to account. In that regard, we reiterate our call on Ukraine to complete its accession to the Rome Statute.

After the devastating horrors of the Second World War, Europe has shown remarkable will and ability to pursue the path of reconciliation and peace. What started with Franco-German reconciliation — the European Coal and Steel Community — became a unique model of reconciliation and integration that over time evolved into the European Union of today, a model for democracy, peace, prosperity and human rights whose appeal continues to draw European nations eager to join its ranks. It is reckless and profoundly dangerous to seek to turn the clock back on that spirit of reconciliation, solidarity and cooperation, which gave Europe and the world its longest-ever period of peace. Russia's continued violations of the Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act and numerous other agreements to which it is a signatory, as well as its attempts to redraw internationally recognized borders by force, threaten that peace.

In Minsk, the Presidents of Russia, Ukraine, France and Germany recommitted to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine — although some of those words somehow managed to slip out of today's resolution. We expect that commitment to be respected unconditionally by all, and by Russia in particular. We ask the United Nations to continue its active engagement in seeking a durable solution to this conflict through its good offices, mediation, monitoring of human rights and provision of humanitarian assistance.

Mr. Mangaral (Chad) (*spoke in French*): We would like to commend the Russian Federation for initiating today's resolution 2202 (2015), as well as all the countries that made positive contributions to its final draft. Chad welcomes its unanimous adoption by the members of the Security Council, who once again demonstrated their unity and responsibility in the face of the gravity of the situation in Ukraine, particularly in its eastern region. We appreciate the measures being taken to implement the Minsk agreements, and in that regard we urge all the parties to begin working immediately to put the resolution's provisions into practice in order to arrive at a lasting political solution to the crisis in Ukraine.

Mr. Ramírez Carreño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela fully supports today's resolution 2022 (2015) because we consider it a very important and fundamental contribution to an agreement on a political and peaceful solution to this conflict. My country supports a peaceful resolution to conflicts in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Venezuela emphasize's that the mediation of the countries in the region and active diplomacy are the path to a negotiated resolution of the conflict. In that connection, we support the fact that the Security Council endorses through this resolution the statement adopted at Minsk on 12 February by the Presidents of the Russian Federation, Ukraine and France and the Chancellor of Germany in support of the package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements. Those agreements should have all the necessary political support for their implementation. We trust in the political will of the Heads of State that made that possible.

Moreover, Venezuela welcomes the fact that this resolution reaffirms resolution 2166 (2014) with respect to carrying out a transparent, full, exhaustive and independent international investigation, in conformity with international civil aviation guidelines, that makes it possible to determine responsibility for the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH-17 so as to bring to justice those responsible for that heinous act. We call on the parties to adhere strictly to the obligations pertaining to the protection of civilians, including the need to guarantee humanitarian access to provide assistance to internally displaced persons, refugees and other persons residing in the areas affected by the conflict, in accordance with the package of measures for the implementation of the 12 February Minsk agreements.

In conclusion, we do not believe that this is a time for hate, fear or war propaganda. This is a time for peace, political dialogue and diplomacy.

Mr. Hmoud (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): Jordan voted in support of resolution 2202 (2015) because we believe that a political solution is the right way to achieve peace and security and to help Ukraine regain stability. We call on the parties to fully implement the provisions of the September Minsk agreement in accordance with the specified time frame. The Minsk agreement is the main reference point upon which all successive agreements are based. Furthermore, we believe that the package of measures does not in any way alter the provisions of the Minsk agreement.

We call upon all parties to observe the agreements and to implement the measures set out therein. We also call upon them to take the necessary measures to declare a ceasefire and to withdraw heavy weaponry. In that connection, we would like to express our concern about the failure over the last two days to respect the ceasefire in Debaltseve. We also call on the secessionists to put an end to violations of the agreements.

In conclusion, we call on the parties concerned to show the seriousness required to reach a peaceful political solution that allows Ukraine to regain its territorial integrity and independence.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of China.

China supports resolution 2202 (2015), which the Security Council just adopted. The meeting of the leaders of Russia, Germany, France and Ukraine in Minsk resulted in an agreement on a series of important issues pertaining to the Ukrainian crisis. China welcomes that fact and views it positively. The agreement reached by the four leaders in Minsk helps to ease tensions in eastern Ukraine and to promote the process of a political solution to the Ukrainian crisis. The agreement was hard-won and we hope that it will be valued and effectively implemented by all parties.

The Council should also scale up its support so that this agreement can be an important watershed moment in the efforts to de-escalate tensions in eastern Ukraine and help restore peace and stability in the country at an early date. Resolution 2202 (2015), which was adopted unanimously, is an illustration of the international community's support for the fruitful diplomatic efforts of the four leaders and for a political solution to the Ukrainian issue.

In addressing the Ukraine issue, we must stay the course of a political solution. The problem of Ukraine has historical complexities and present realities. A fundamental and long-term solution of this issue must both accommodate the legitimate interests and concerns of all all regions and all ethnic groups throughout Ukraine and address the legitimate concerns of all the relevant parties so that a balance of interests can be achieved. We hope that all parties will make joint efforts to implement the agreement and search for a political solution that is comprehensive, balanced and long-lasting in order to achieve peace, security, stability and development in Ukraine and the region as a whole.

China stands ready to continue to play an active and constructive role in promoting a political solution to the issue.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

Mr. Sergeyev (Ukraine): Let me start with our thanks to you personally, Mr. President, and to the members of the Security Council for today's strong statement on the situation in Debaltseve. I will speak on that issue later.

We are grateful to the members of the Security Council for their continued support of the Minsk process since the first agreements on a peaceful settlement were adopted, on 5 and 19 September. Ukraine welcomes the Council's support for the recent 12 February agreements, which do not substitute for but, rather, reinforce those adopted last Semptember.

The Russian side quite obviously positions itself as a devoted proponent of the peace process and a guarantor of the effective implementation of the Minsk agreements. It even proposed resolution 2203 (2015), which has just been adopted. Yet that is all on paper; what happens in reality is quite the opposite.

Ukraine has demonstrated a responsible attitude to fulfilling the international obligations it has undertaken. The arrangement on ensuring the ceasefire regime starting 15 February has been fulfilled as stipulated in the documents adopted in Minsk and in the Normandy format with the participation of the Presidents of Ukraine, France and Russia and the Chancellor of Germany. Withdrawing heavy weaponry after ensuring an unconditional, comprehensive and sustainable ceasefire — with the assistance and monitoring of

the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the support of the trilateral contact group — was to be the next step.

Unfortunately, despite hopes for a responsible position on the part of all the parties that adopted the 12 February declaration in support of the package of measures on the fulfilment of the Minsk agreements and the signatories to that set of measures — including the Russian Federation and the so-called Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic — there has been a failure to comply with the agreements, and the hope for peace has virtually been ruined. Instead, at the moment there are attempts to return everyone to war and an escalation of the situation.

Yesterday, after telephone negotiations with the President of Russia, the Chancellor of Germany and the President of France, there was an agreement to hold negotiations at the level of the representatives of the general staff of the armed forces of Ukraine, the general staff of the armed forces of the Russian Federation and representatives of Luhansk and Donetsk. Negotiations were held this morning via video teleconference. While restoring the access of the OSCE mission to Debaltseve was to be the outcome of the negotiations, the Russian party blocked the opportunity. Militants in control of Debaltseve have declared the continuation of offensive operations, thereby flagrantly violating all of the previous arrangements and the entire package of the Minsk agreements.

From midnight on 15 February until this morning, Ukrainian positions were shelled more than 160 times — not with small arms, but with mortars, artillery systems, rocket systems and tanks. Eleven servicemen were killed and 36 wounded as a result of those attacks by the terrorists. Yet the Ukrainian military has kept its weapons silent, unless it was under direct attack.

On the very first day of the ceasefire, the Russian side illegally brought the fourteenth so-called humanitarian convoy into the east of Ukraine. As before, that was done without the consent of the Ukrainian side and without activating the international mechanism that the 12 February arrangements clearly envisaged.

I have not mentioned that the number of trucks, as well as their contents, does not match what was declared in the documents. I think it will not be a surprise to any member of the Council to hear that heavy weapons and equipment continue to be shipped to the east of Ukraine. Today at least 12 armoured vehicles and 54 trucks with ammunition broke into Ukraine through the Izvaryne border checkpoint, which the Ukrainian Government currently does not control.

The situation in Debaltseve is incredibly tense. Again with the support of Russian forces and heavy weapons, the militants are incessantly and violently attacking Ukrainian positions in and around the town. Taking advantage of the situation of the Ukrainian military refraining from taking action, in line with the ceasefire, the militants and Russian forces have done their best to surround the town. The militants' ringleader blatantly threatened to kill every defender of Debaltseve unless they laid down their weapons. He also threatened to move westward and seize the city of Kharkiv. Civilians are also falling victim to the indiscriminate shelling of the town by the terrorists.

The cruel assaults on Debaltseve and many other locations essentially make a mockery of the ceasefire concept and undermine the very essence of the peace process. Against that backdrop, we call on the countries participating in the Minsk negotiations — Germany, France and Russia — to make every possible effort to ensure the fulfilment of the Minsk plan based on the 5 September Minsk protocol, the Minsk memorandum of 19 September and the documents adopted on 12 February in Minsk.

We call on the countries Members of the United Nations to express a decisive protest against the blocking of the work of the OSCE special monitoring mission. We also call on the permanent members of the Security Council to prevent further violation of the fundamental principles and rules of the United Nations and avert the unleashing of full-scale warfare in the very centre of Europe.

To become a real contributor to a peaceful settlement of the conflict, the Russian Federation needs to withdraw all of its armed forces from the territory of Ukraine and to secure the Russian-Ukrainian border, as well as to force Russian-backed separatists to fulfil the provisions of the Minsk agreements.

The chance for peace must be used. The unity of the entire civilized world in solidarity with Ukraine gives hope for the restoration of peace.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Mr. Braun (Germany): Germany welcomes resolution 2202 (2015), just adopted by the Security

Council, which endorses the 12 February package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements of September 2014. The Security Council has thus sent a clear signal that it is ready to assume its responsibility at this crucial juncture in the conflict in and around Ukraine to ensure the comprehensive implementation of the package of measures for implementation of the Minsk protocol of 5 September and the Minsk memorandum of 19 September 2014, which remain, in their entirety, the unalterable legal and political basis for the conflict settlement process. We hope that the endorsement of the Minsk agreements by the Council will have a strong stabilizing effect on the situation on the ground and contribute to the strict and full implementation of the ceasefire and to the follow-on political process.

According to current reporting by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, thus far the ceasefire has been largely holding, with the most deplorable exception of Debaltseve, as outlined in the Council's press statement (SC/11784). The continuing attacks threaten not only the ceasefire, they also undermine the political settlement process as agreed upon in the framework of the trilateral contact group and as endorsed by the Normandy format Heads of State and Government in Minsk.

Against that background, today's resolution is of the utmost importance. The resolution conveys a stern message to those who violate the ceasefire. The ceasefire spoilers must know that they are opposing the resolve of the international community.

Germany reiterates its commitment to the sovereignty, political independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 68/262, on the situation in Ukraine. I would also like to reiterate our condemnation of the illegal annexation of Crimea, which we will not recognize. It is our clear understanding, in the context of this resolution, that the territorial integrity of Ukraine means territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Churkin (*spoke in Russian*): We had hoped that the unanimous adoption of resolution 2202 (2015) and today's discussion in the Security Council, the first since reaching the Minsk agreements of 12 February, would send a unifying signal and pave the way for greater harmony in the Council's work than before on the issue of the Ukraine crisis. Our hopes were partly realized. We continue to hope that this clear, concise resolution will guide the parties towards implementing the decisions adopted in Minsk.

However, we were disappointed by the discussion, because some colleagues decided to begin with their usual rhetoric, which was often offensive. Particularly offensive were the attempts to rewrite the Minsk agreements in these conditions. Some delegations picked out certain parts of the agreement to interpret the Minsk agreements. The situation now is very simple: we need to look at the provisions of the resolution and implement the document as it was adopted, as is the usual fashion.

I should also mention the expression used by Ms. Power in referring to an "upside-down world". She accused Russia of starting the crisis, but did we topple the legally elected President? Throughout all of the events that took place in Ukraine a year ago, Russia continually called for a bloodless political solution. We supported the 21 February agreement. We then insisted on its implementation, even after the lawfully elected President had been toppled.

We supported the 17 April communiqué that called for constitutional dialogue. We supported the initiative by the Chair of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). What was the impetus for the armed conflict that we are seeing? The impetus was the support by certain Western countries of the decision of the Kyiv leadership to militarily suppress the dissatisfaction of the people in the east. They set fire to them in Odesa and burned them alive in Mariupol. They launched a military operation in Donbas and started to send in heavy guns. What is war? War is when there is an attack and there is a defence. That is what we have been seeing in recent times. That is what happened in Debaltseve.

Kyiv could have acted nobly after reaching the 12 February agreement. They could have allowed their soldiers surrounded in Debaltseve to save their lives. Instead, they first denied that they were surrounded, and then they began issuing orders not to lay down weapons. There are certain rules to the game; you cannot let heavy equipment out of a surrounded area because that would simply qualify as regrouping. What we are seeing is a regrouping of Ukrainian armed

forces after the September agreements in Minsk. Such a courageous decision by the Ukrainian authorities could have saved the lives of civilians. Instead, Kyiv preferred to get carried away by patriotic rhetoric and called for actions that have led to the most tragic consequences.

Ms. Power spoke of the difficult situation for civilians in Debaltseve. What about the citizens in Debaltseve who could not leave the city? One's heart bleeds for them. And are the people in Donetsk any better off? Why did she say nothing about them? Ukrainian security forces have been shelling Donetsk for months, but no one seems to be bothered about that. Many other villages and towns have been razed to the ground as a result of the actions of Ukrainian security forces. Why did no one in the West say anything about those situations? We have been flagging those situations all along. For some reason, however, there has been no reaction from our Western colleagues. The September Minsk agreements have not been upheld as we initially hoped because the shelling of towns has continued. The OSCE monitors therefore need to do their work, including in and around Debaltseve. For that to happen, however, safe conditions must be established. We all must recall that these are unarmed people. Yes, they are in armoured cars, but without certain minimum security conditions they cannot effectively control or monitor anything.

To be honest, I am surprised that our Ukrainian colleague today returned to the issue of the 14 humanitarian convoys. Convoys have saved hundreds of civilian lives in Donbas and Luhansk under shelling, while being surrounded and subject to the active blockade established by the Ukrainian authorities against the people of those cities. We have always Kyiv to cooperate with us in organizing the convoys. Each and every time they have refused to cooperate; I believe that the Ukrainian customs officers inspected the convoys only once. We will not allow anyone to play games with these issues. Kyiv needs to help us save people's lives. People need to get through the winter. Russia has been providing aid, and we are very satisfied and pleased with the assistance we have been able to offer.

Two colleagues mentioned Crimea. I have just one word to those statements: 93. Recently, a German public opinion group conducted a poll among Crimean residents and came to the conclusion that 93 per cent of the people in Crimea supported unification with Russia. In addition, 82 per cent said that outright; 11 per cent said they would prefer it; 4 per cent were against it. That is even slightly more than the percentage in favour in the referendum on Crimea's unification with Russia. With regard to territorial integrity, resolution 2202 (2015) confirms the territorial integrity of Ukraine — and this in February 2015.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The representative of the United States has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Ms. Power (United States of America): I just want to be clear in response to my Russian colleague that the United States wholeheartedly welcomes the agreement. We will do all we can to support it. But if Russia is committed to peace, it does not need a Security Council resolution to prove it. There are actually easier ways to prove it. Russia could stop arming the separatists; stop sending hundreds of heavy weapons across the border, in addition to Russian troops; stop pretending that it is not doing what it is doing; and start calling on and insisting that the separatists observe the ceasefire around Debaltseve. Resolution or no resolution, what matters is fulfilling the commitments that have been made now multiple times. I assure him that we will be the first to take notice, and it will actually be very easy to see whether or not the commitments are being met.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I am glad to hear that the United States is not going to prevent the implementation of the Minsk agreements. With regard to the implementation of the Minsk agreements and the statement about Russia repeating certain previous arguments, we are not pretending anything. We proposed a certain course of action. No one listened to us. We warned about the consequences. Sadly, those consequences are what they have been. This has all been happening on our borders. We made our choice, as set out in the Minsk agreements. I hope that those agreements will be duly delivered on.

I hope that peace can be restored in Ukraine and that there can be social consensus in the country — which has not existed for a very long time now, not even before the past year when the President was toppled. That is what we need to work on, which Kyiv, for some reason, has not wanted to do. For instance, one can see the disgust over the new national holiday, which was declared on the same date that they established collaboration

with the pro-Nazi army. They have said nothing about setting up a new Constitution — a genuine pity. That is what Russia had already warned about. Let us look at the situation clearly and objectively.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The representative of Ukraine has asked for the floor to make a further statement. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Sergeyev (Ukraine) (*spoke in Russian*): What has been called the unification of Crimea should really be called occupation and annexation following an aggressive attack. We shall discuss that further.

What was said about humanitarian convoys is a challenge to international law, which defines arrangements for supplies of humanitarian assistance to a second country. In today's statement by the representative of Russia, international law was once again trampled all over. They have their law and they know how to use it.

As to a constitution, we reject anything that smacks of Russian interference. Russia has been trying to tell us how we should develop and what our constitutional order should be — what the next Constitution should look like. Everything was clearly stated to our people.

With regard to the eastern regions, as well as elsewhere, work is under way on decentralization and expanding the powers of local authorities.

Therefore, once again, I ask that Russia not interfere in our affairs. We will decide for ourselves how to live, what to build and how to establish dialogue with our own people.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): If Ukraine needs to find a way for dialogue it should do so at last. But they are unable to do so. That is why we keep saying, let us establish dialogue with the people in the east. But Ukraine says that we are interfering. They are asking us: What do the people in the east want? We say that the people in the east want federalization. They should therefore go and find that dialogue.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The representative of Lithuania has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Ms. Murmokaitė (Lithuania): There is a pattern in this repeated taking of the floor, and usually there is one delegation that ends by taking the floor three or four times. We rarely do that, but this time I have a couple of comments. First, it is not easy for any country, be it Ukraine or any other country, to work on a constitution in conflict or at gunpoint, where there are so-called self-defenders, which is the way Russia has consistently referred to the illegal bands of militants and criminals who are better armed than many European armies.

Lithuania has no tanks — not a single one. Estonia, Latvia and so many other countries in Europe have not a single tank. How is it, then, that there are hundreds of tanks in the hands of the militants? There are hundreds of Tornados, howitzers, or whatever they are. This does not make any sense. Those things do not drop out of the sky, so somebody is supplying them. In looking at the geography, those things can come only from one direction, where the borders are completely porous and far from international eyes.

We do believe, and in our national capacity we have been telling and will continue to tell Ukraine, that it has to continue with the reforms, that it has to combat corruption and that it has to do a lot of things in order to restore the trust that had been lost over the decades, prior to this Government. But it is very difficult to take care of a constitution when guns are pointed at your head.

The other thing that struck me was basically a phrase about how Kyiv could have nobly capitulated and allowed the troops to leave. I wonder how many countries represented in this Chamber would be happy to capitulate their own city, surrounded by illegal militants, bandits and insurgents — whoever they are — far from any ceasefire zone, and to just give up part of their territory and leave, nobly?

I think it is very cynical to talk of the noble potential of the Kyiv authorities to leave and withdraw their soldiers, and of Kyiv having missed that opportunity. It is their territory and they are defending their territory. That territory is excluded from any ceasefire agreement reached at either of the Minsk negotiations. It is their own territory, and I think that any country represented at this table would do exactly the same. Any country represented here would defend its own territory to the last, and Kyiv is no exception.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor again.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I would very much like to have left the last word to my Lithuanian colleague; I would have loved to, if I could. I am probably abusing my speaking time, but after what she said I cannot help but respond with a couple of words. "Capitulate one's territory." Has the full meaning of the Minsk agreements been understood? Everything that we are talking about concerns the reintegration of Ukraine. How significant is it where the line is drawn in such conditions?

In recent months, the problem has been that the Ukrainian security forces have been shelling towns. They had to be pushed back from Donetsk so that they could not shell the cities. But with all that bloodshed, if Ukraine is to be reintegrated, is there a desire to draw a new State borderline? In that case, let us draw a new State borderline and then we can address that issue.

Now, as to the issue of weapons, Lithuania is, I believe, the only State that has sincerely and officially stated that it is supplying weapons to Kyiv. Perhaps the militia could also be provided with some of those Lithuanian weapons?

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): Our meeting today is not an open debate. With that, I now give the floor to the representative of Lithuania.

Ms. Murmokaitė (Lithuania): We have a tiny army and very small reserves of weapons. It is not exactly right to suggest that Lithuania is providing armaments to Ukraine. We have provided medical assistance; we have taken wounded Ukrainian soldiers into Lithuanian hospitals. That is true. However, it has nothing to do with all of the heavy weaponry that has been provided — we know from which side. So let us not compare forces, because Lithuanian forces — and we can revisit statistics next time — certainly have nothing to do with that. Even if we did provide some armaments, it would be a drop in the ocean. It would not make a difference.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The representative of Ukraine has asked for the floor again. I give him the floor.

Mr. Sergeyev (Ukraine): I am sorry, Mr. President, but what we have heard from our colleague is unacceptable. Our leaders met in Minsk and they made very clear statements. They supported very clear provisions, and we cannot agree with the interpretation of the Minsk agreements that has been heard from the Russian side. I am so sorry, but we are not here to launch a third round of Minsk negotiations and reinterpret what our leaders agreed upon.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The members of the Council have continued to provoke me. We are not interpreting anything. We are taking the Minsk agreements and interpreting them word by word, and we think that everyone should read the document word by word and implement it.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.